

NIHONGA

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Transcending the Past

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Transcending the Past: Japanese-Style Painting, 1868–1968

Ellen P. Conant

in collaboration with

Steven D. Owyoung
J. Thomas Rimer

The Saint Louis Art Museum
The Japan Foundation

Published on the occasion of the exhibition *Nihonga, Transcending the Past: Japanese-Style Painting, 1868–1968*, which has been organized by The Saint Louis Art Museum and The Japan Foundation, in cooperation with The National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo, The National Museum of Modern Art, Kyoto, and Kyoto Municipal Museum of Art. Air transportation has been provided by Japan Airlines Company Ltd.

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Contents

6 Forewords The Japan Foundation
The Saint Louis Art Museum

8 Acknowledgments

12 1. Introduction
Ellen P. Conant

15 2. Tradition in Transition, 1868–1890
Ellen P. Conant

25 3. The Tokyo School of Fine Arts and the Development of *Nihonga*, 1889–1906
Ellen P. Conant

36 4. "Bunten": A National Forum, 1907–1918
Ellen P. Conant

44 5. "Teiten" and After, 1919–1935
J. Thomas Rimer

57 6. Encountering Blank Spaces: A Decade of War, 1935–1945
J. Thomas Rimer

62 7. Postwar Developments: Absorption and Amalgamation, 1945–1968
J. Thomas Rimer

72 8. Some Final Observations
J. Thomas Rimer

75 *Nihonga*: Issues and Institutions

113 Catalogue
Steven D. Owyoung

290 Biographies

335 Notes to the Reader

336 Bibliography

344 Index

Foreword

The Japan Foundation is extremely pleased to present *Nihonga, Transcending the Past: Japanese-Style Painting, 1868–1968*, an exhibition featuring a century of modern Japanese-style painting, at The Saint Louis Art Museum.

In the mid-nineteenth century, when Japan suddenly abandoned its closed-door policy and reopened relations with other nations, the many techniques of Western painting were imported all at once, creating the need to coin the word *Nihonga* (Japanese-style painting) in order to distinguish Japanese from Western-style painting. Thus, although the word is relatively new, *Nihonga*, or Japanese painting, is fundamentally a traditional form of art that was fostered and nourished over more than a millennium of cultural history, during which time it absorbed nourishing influences from Chinese painting. Japanese painting has thus enjoyed a long and profound lineage, during which numerous schools of painting received and passed on their traditions. The strong stimulus from Western painting challenged *Nihonga* to transform itself into a modern genre and establish itself as a uniquely Japanese style of painting.

Although *Nihonga* has been introduced abroad, previous exhibitions have tended to concentrate only on contemporary works or certain collections. It has long been our hope that *Nihonga* could be seen more completely as a modern art form on the international level. This exhibition contains works from the three eras spanning the hundred years of Japan's modern period: the Meiji (1868–1912), Taishō (1912–1926) and Shōwa (1926–1989) eras in a comprehensive view of the many trends and expressions of *Nihonga*.

In the early Meiji era, *Nihonga* was caught up in the response to rapid changes of culture and society. For a while it seemed that *Nihonga* was on the decline until the appearance of the American scholar Ernest Fenollosa and his collaboration with Okakura Tenshin. Together they strengthened the impetus to create a new type of Japanese painting. In the cultural capitals of Tokyo and Kyoto, artists strove to bring to life a *Nihonga* more vibrant for the new age.

Against the background of economic prosperity in the Taishō era, the liberalism and individuality of expression of artists blossomed. An enlightened, modern sense of self, given a new dimension through the influence of Post-Impressionism and Fauvism, burst forth in a wild profusion of creative energy. Imbued with its rich color sense and lyric beauty, Taishō *Nihonga* attained perhaps the highest level in the genre's history.

Nihonga from the Shōwa era was overshadowed by the dark clouds of war. Artists turned back to the past in an almost neo-classical revival of traditional Japanese painting. While some of the works of this period reached great heights of expressive achievement, the young shoots of new trends were often uprooted, and the world of painting faced Japan's defeat stripped of vitality. The increased Westernization of Japan's society and lifestyles progressed rapidly after the war, and the sense of values of the people as a whole underwent drastic change. Yet once again, *Nihonga* emerged from the confusion, and today receives wide-ranging support as a form of painting that expresses the sense and sensibilities of the Japanese people.

This exhibition of 171 works of *Nihonga* was chosen for how well these paintings express not only the times in which they were created, but also the various themes determined by the exhibition's guest curator, Ellen P. Conant. Such an approach allows for an explanation of *Nihonga*'s special characteristics and bewitching charm; its many modes of expression, style, technique, and subject matter; its combination of tradition and innovation; and its potential for further expression. As it also represents the first comprehensive introduction of modern *Nihonga* outside of Japan, we hope that the exhibition will attract an extensive audience and go on to provide a further opportunity through which viewers may deepen their understanding and appreciation of *Nihonga*. Indeed, we further hope that this exhibition will present the concepts of beauty and aesthetics nourished in Japan over the long course of its history.

We are extremely grateful to all those who so generously agreed to lend their treasures to this international effort. Further, we would like to extend our gratitude to the co-organizer of this exhibition, The Saint Louis Art Museum, and to the guest curator, Ellen P. Conant, who actively promoted plans for this exhibition, as well as to all those who cooperated with her research and writing, especially the Japanese Exhibition Executive Committee and numerous Japanese scholars and curators. We would like to express special thanks to Japan Airlines for their transportation of the artworks, and to all those whose hard work and dedication over a nine-year period led to the realization of this exhibition.

In this year marking the fiftieth anniversary of the end of World War II, it is our fervent wish that this exhibition, the result of joint efforts and cooperation between individuals in both the United States and Japan, will serve to reaffirm and further strengthen the ties of friendship and goodwill between our two countries.

Asao Shinichirō
President
The Japan Foundation

Foreword

Nihonga is literally Japanese painting. The term itself—enigmatic in its sound, terse in its blending of what is Japanese (*Nihon*) with what is painting (*ga*)—was not even a word until the later part of the nineteenth century, when it became necessary to distinguish the kind of Japanese painting that followed its own tradition from one that pursued a new course based on Western painting (*yōga*). We are more familiar with the development and presence of *yōga* , for the story of the romantic relationship between *yōga* and Impressionism and Post-Impressionism is a favored one in art history. We are pleased to be the first American museum to host a major exhibition of paintings known as *Nihonga*.

It has been rare, though not singular, that so pristine but isolated a culture has had to reckon so overwhelmingly with a great influx of artistic, cultural, and social change. When Japan was "opened to the West" in 1853 by the historic visit of Commodore Perry—a tale told in every American history text—it was not a society whose isolation was an accident or whose culture was stumbled across in the age of imperialism. Trade with Japan had been sought for centuries, and it was a tenacious resistance to the outside world that kept it at bay so long. The timing of Perry's aggressive invitation coincided with a shift of power that had been brewing a few decades, which culminated in the Meiji Restoration of 1868. The speedy Westernization of commerce, industry, social exchange, and politics that followed has been discussed in other books. What it meant for painting in this advanced culture is of great interest to us and the subject of our exhibition and book.

Throughout the long planning of the *Nihonga* exhibition, we have had the good fortune of working closely with The Japan Foundation, Tokyo, which has made this important artistic and cultural undertaking possible, under the direction of Asao Shinichirō, President of The Japan Foundation, and Inoue Takakuni, its Director of the Exhibition Division. We are also thankful for the cooperation of our fellow institutions: The National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo, which has been represented by Uchiyama Takeo and the late Iwasaki Yoshikazu; The National Museum of Modern Art, Kyoto, which has been represented by Tomiyama Hideo; and the Kyoto Municipal Museum of Art, which has been represented by Hirano Shigemitsu.

We have received generous support from numerous sources. Our deepest gratitude goes to the Japan World Exposition Commemorative Fund which has provided substantial support for the successful underpinning of this project. And we are especially grateful to the Monsanto Fund and to Mercantile Bank for underwriting this project and for their spirited and continued support. Thanks also to the National Endowment for the Arts, a Federal agency; the Missouri Arts Council, a state agency; the E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Foundation; the Metropolitan Center for Far Eastern Art Studies; The Japan Foundation, New York; and The Japan Foundation Center for Global Partnership. We thank Frances L. Blakemore and Griffith Way for their active interest in the field of Japanese art and their generosity to our efforts.

The exhibition is supported by an indemnity from the Federal Council on the Arts and Humanities. Japan Airlines assisted in transporting the works of art and providing passage for officials, curators, and, scholars.

This exhibition would have been never possible without generous cooperation of the institutional and private lenders who shared their works of art. A full list of their names appears at the end of the Acknowledgments.

In presenting this special exhibition we hope to reinforce our Museum's commitment to the dynamic balance between art of the past and art of the present day. Our particular interest in *Nihonga* began when we started to acquire modern and contemporary Japanese art for the Museum's Asian collections, expanding beyond the boundaries of conventional scholarship and collecting, which appeared to neglect late-nineteenth- and twentieth-century painting. In pursuit of this exhibition, we sought the conviction and support of our Japanese colleagues as well as the expertise and knowledge of our guest curator Ellen P. Conant and project advisor J. Thomas Rimer, who are authors of this book. Many scholars in Japan and America have assisted in the exhibition and publication, and it is with our sincerest appreciation that we recognize their work. Rick Simoncelli, the Museum's assistant director, has managed this formidable project with courage and admirable vision. Steven D. Owyoung, our curator of Asian art, quietly steered our course towards an exhibition of international scope and intimate beauty. We are grateful to them all for helping us present this exhibition and publication.

Nihonga, Transcending the Past: Japanese-Style Painting, 1868–1968 reflects the most recent scholarship of American and Japanese art historians. It has been our intent to offer the exhibition and the book with the hope of inspiring further examination, study, and appreciation of *Nihonga* in the future. As the exclusive venue of the exhibition, we are honored with this rare opportunity to offer *Nihonga* to our audience and the field.

James D. Burke
Director
The Saint Louis Art Museum

Acknowledgments

We take great pleasure in recognizing the contributions of the many remarkable people and institutions which have made the *Nihonga* exhibition possible. It is with sincere appreciation that we thank the individuals and organizations in Japan, Europe, and America for their wholehearted involvement. As co-organizer of the exhibition, The Japan Foundation established the essential organization for the show and rendered invaluable assistance and guidance in many other areas of the project. The National Endowment for the Arts was among the first to provide substantive funds for extensive planning and initial progress. At The Saint Louis Art Museum, Director James D. Burke has been the project's most enthusiastic proponent, who early on recognized the importance of *Nihonga* as a modern art form and its wonderful potential as an exhibition.

The Japan Foundation and its dedicated staff have supported the *Nihonga* project over several years, nurturing the concept through myriad phases of development. In Tokyo, Inoue Takakuni, Director of the Exhibition Division and a member of the Japanese Exhibition Executive Committee, oversaw with a sure hand the organizational structure as the project began to be implemented. Senior Coodinator Itō Masanobu dealt with the considerable task of coordinating the Japanese loans and logistics. He was ably assisted throughout by fellow coordinator Koyama Naomi. In America, Noro Masahiko, Director of the Foundation's New York office, was aided by Assistant Director Yura Satoshi. At every turn, the Foundation offered its help and advice.

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Ellen P. Conant
J. Thomas Rimer
Steven D. Owyoung

Lenders to the Exhibition

Adachi Museum of Art, Yasugi
Aichi Prefectural Museum of Art
The Akita Museum of Modern Art
Art Museum, Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music
Banshō Co. Ltd., Akita
British Museum, London
The Mary and Jackson Burke Foundation, New York
Chiba City Museum of Art
Fukui Fine Arts Museum
Fukuoka Art Museum
Gas Museum (Tokyo Gas Co., Ltd.), Kodaira
Hashimoto Kansetsu Memorial Museum and Garden, Kyoto
Hiraki Ukiyoe Museum, Yokohama
The Hiratsuka Museum of Art
Household of Princess Chichibu
Iida City Museum
The Imperial Household Agency
The Japan Ukiyoe Museum, Matsumoto
The Jōyō Geibun Center, Mito
Kachūan Seihō Museum, Kyoto
Kamakura City
Kawanabe Kyōsai Memorial Museum, Warabi
Khalili Collection, London
Kiyoshikōjin Seichōji, Takarazuka
Komatsu Nobuhisa
Kongōbuji, Wakayama Prefecture
Kōno Toyokazu
Kumamoto Prefectural Museum of Art
Kyoto Municipal Museum of Art
Kyoto Prefectural Inshō-Dōmoto Museum of Fine Arts
Kyoto Prefectural Sōgō Shiryōkan (The Museum of Kyoto)
Maeda Ikutokukai Foundation, Tokyo
Meguro Gajoen Museum of Art, Tokyo
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York
Mie Prefectural Art Museum
The Miyagi Museum of Art
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The Museum of Modern Art, Shiga
Museum of the Imperial Collections, Tokyo
Nagano Masaharu
Narukawa Art Forum, Hakone-machi
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The National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo
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The Niigata Prefectural Museum of Modern Art
Ōhara Museum of Art, Kurashiki
Ono Jōshō
Osaka City Museum of Modern Art
Osaka Municipal Museum of Art
Osaka Prefectural Nakanoshima Library
Etsuko and Joe Price
Ryūshi Memorial Art Museum of Ōta-ku, Tokyo
The Saint Louis Art Museum
Santa Barbara Museum of Art
Markham Sexton, courtesy Peabody Essex Museum, Salem
Shimane Prefectural Museum of Art (Planning Office)
Shimonoseki City Art Museum
Shimoyama Hiroshi
Shuzenji-chō, Shizuoka Prefecture
Sōkenji, Azuchi
Staatliche Museen zu Berlin-Preussischer Kulturbesitz Museum für Ostasiastische Kunst
Sunpu Museum, Shizuoka
Takaoka Municipal Museum
Takashimaya Historical Museum, Osaka
Tenneiji, Kyoto
Toda Shunzō
Tokyo National Museum
Tomita Noriko and Hiraoka Iichirō
Uchiyama Takeo
University Art Museum of Kyoto City University of Arts
Griffith and Patricia Way, Seattle
The Yamaguchi Prefectural Museum of Art
Yamatane Museum of Art, Tokyo
Yokoyama Taikan Memorial Hall, Tokyo
Anonymous private collections

1.
Introduction

Ellen P. Conant

When Japan emerged from its long seclusion and came within the orbit of the Western nations during the mid-nineteenth century, the country possessed an artistic heritage that was extremely eclectic and accomplished. Over the past millenium and more, it had proved capable of absorbing and synthesizing influences from the West, Near East, India, China, and Korea in forging its own distinctive artistic expression. But unlike the past, when Japan could assimilate influences from abroad over long periods and in relative isolation, the modern encounter was too immediate, too rapid, and too profound to admit a measured and discriminating response.

Historical Imperatives

Japan's traditional arts elicited such esteem from the West that Meiji bureaucrats sought to exploit their economic and cultural potential. Unfortunately, foreign fascination with intricately designed and skillfully wrought crafts did not extend to painting, which, by virtue of its fragile nature, format limitations, and unfamiliar imagery and modes of representation, met as cool a reception as it had during the previous four centuries of Japan's trade with the West.

Modern Japanese painters found themselves adversely compared in Japan to their forebears and exhorted by native and foreign critics alike to maintain the integrity of their arts. Nevertheless, innate curiosity and inventiveness prompted traditional painters to explore the potential of Western art without reliance on foreign mentors and government officials. They also proved resourceful in assisting craftsmen and entrepreneurs to further the development of Meiji crafts, which are now the subject of renewed respect and scholarly interest.[1]

It is therefore arbitrary to identify the origins of *Nihonga* with the Tokyo School of Fine Arts (Tokyo Bijutsu Gakkō) and to imply that it required official intervention to revive what was demonstrably a vital tradition. There is, likewise, little evidence that the inroads of Westernization had been as excessive and debilitating as is claimed. Nor could the distinction between *Nihonga* (Japanese-style painting) and *yōga* (Western-style painting) have been as pronounced as asserted at a time when most of the early *yōga* artists had had prior training in traditional schools of painting and continued to work simultaneously in Japanese and Western styles. Fortunately, the artists were too committed to fall prey to cultural chauvinism as they persevered in their efforts to create an art that could embody their own creative impulses and growing sense of personal identity. The fact that so many of the most innovative artists of early Taishō attended the private *juku* of traditional painters argues for the continued vitality of the established schools of Japanese painting long after their presumed decline into rote conservativism.

Unlike the small European nations—Scandinavia, the Baltics, and Switzerland—that were likewise bent on forging a national art which was based, however, on a common European artistic heritage, Japan was compelled to fuse two complex and disparate traditions. It would surely be instructive to compare these parallel developments, as exemplified, for instance, in the career of the Swiss artist Ferdinand Hodler.[2] Many of the Scandinavian artists who attended French academies alongside Japan's *yōga* artists faced thematic and stylistic dilemmas that were no less relevant to the concerns of the *Nihonga* painters.

Pretentiously self-conscious academic painting of mid-Meiji, conceived for official purposes and foreign display, failed to garner attention, but the private, more intimate works became increasingly sensitive and appealing. By the Taishō era, *Nihonga* had become artistically and economically so highly esteemed within Japan that it seemed beyond the reach of foreign collectors, who became increas-

ingly appreciative of a wider range of Japanese art from earlier periods. The prevalence of government salons inevitably fostered much that was technically accomplished but artistically banal. This should not obscure the unflagging inventiveness of these self-same painters in their more personal works or of those who shunned official venues. A proliferation of private organizations nurtured many of the ablest artists and their activities and exhibitions greatly contributed to the development of *Nihonga*.

It is revealing to view *Nihonga* in relation to the parallel development of modern Japanese literature, which faced comparable problems in evolving a new written language (*genbun itchi*, the unity of speech and writing) and of integrating elements borrowed from Western literature with their more informed knowledge of Japanese classical literature. It is similarly during late Meiji and early Taishō that the masterpieces of writers Mori Ōgai (1862–1922), Natsume Sōseki (1867–1916), and Shimazaki Tōson (1872–1943) appeared. The elegant erudition of Kōda Rohan (1867–1847) and the polished portrayal of Edo culture by Izumi Kyōka (1873–1939) afforded *Nihonga* painters a new interpretation of the role of traditional craftsmen and performers. Nor should we overlook the many novels in which artists appeared as major protagonists. It is through the portals of contemporary Japanese literature that these artists gained new insights, as well as an acquaintance with Western literature which they would not have been able to read in the original. Artists such as Kaburaki Kiyokata had close relations with literary figures, whose works he illustrated and whose portraits he painted (Plates 86 and 136). Moreover, noted literary characters were often the subject of *Nihonga* paintings.

The mounting nationalism of the 1930s cast a pall over art circles; difficulties persisted throughout the war years due to the scarcity of materials and government control of exhibitions and publications. Restrictions on travel deepened the artists' sense of isolation and conflicted sense of loyalty. Japan's defeat prompted a reexamination of past allegiances and the need to find a new identity. Not until after the signing of the peace treaty in 1952 could artists truly embark upon a fresh endeavor to reexplore *Nihonga* in the radically altered cultural milieu of postwar Japan.

The Neglect of *Nihonga*

Over the ensuing half century, there has been a keen interest in and study of virtually all forms of Japanese art ranging from architecture to Zen painting. In Japan, the astonishing number of new museums, particularly of modern art, erected in recent decades has made the art of the modern era increasingly accessible, while the proliferation of exhibitions of Western art has kept the Japanese artists abreast of the latest developments. The frequency of exhibitions in the West has brought virtually the entire range of Japanese art within the reach of foreign viewers. Even the Japanese postwar avant-garde was the subject of a recent major exhibition.[3]

Nihonga is a glaring omission. Why an art of such utter refinement, technical brilliance, and suave seduction should have so long gone unheeded is an enigma that this study hopes to resolve. *Nihonga* partakes of sensitive and serene environs in which the formal language seems comprehensible while the meaning remains elusive. It reflects the artists' dialogue with their past, with the traditional arts of Japan dating back well over a millennium, and their appropriation of Western concepts and modes of expression. It reveals the search for individual expression and sense of cultural distinctiveness.

These artists are so eclectic and so stylistically versatile that it seemed essential to consider their works thematically in order to make their reliance on tradition and search for innovation more meaningful. This thematic framework enables us to juxtapose works differing in style, technique, and modes of expression to reveal the distinctive character of the individual artists.

Until recently, *Nihonga* has been outside the purview of both historians of modern art and Western historians of Japanese art. It has just begun to receive the attention that it so richly merits. Hopefully this study will kindle new interest and further examination of this challenging aspect of Japan's artistic endeavor during

the century that witnessed its modern transformation following the Meiji Restoration.

Defining *Nihonga*

In the present study, *Nihonga* is assumed to encompass all Japanese painting dating from the Meiji era executed, however loosely, in traditional media and formats. The term literally means "Japanese painting" and appears to have been adopted during the 1880s as a means of distinguishing the evolving forms of traditional painting from an increasing body of works employing Western media, format, and modes of representation. The latter works had originally been more neutrally identified as *abura-e* (oil painting), as opposed to *shoga* (calligraphy and painting) or *suiboku-ga* (ink painting) in the native tradition, but later acquired the politically fraught designation of *yōga* (literally, Western painting).

These early designations by media failed to convey the new concepts identified by the term *bijutsu*, "fine arts," which was first adopted during Japan's participation in the 1873 Vienna Exposition, and the related term *geijutsu*, "art." Given the disproportionate influence of traditional schools of painting during the 1870s and 1880s, when Western art was primarily regarded as a technical skill, the terms *Nihonga* and *yōga* were still fairly neutral; they took on an invidiously divisive political significance around 1890, when they were widely used in the recently established and more numerous schools, museums, exhibitions, and organizations.

The political connotations of identifying "Japanese" versus "Western" styles of painting became implicit in the concerted efforts of official art circles in the late 1880s to create a distinctive form of contemporary art that could express the country's newfound sense of national identity. It has been inferred that this art stemmed from the efforts of Ernest F. Fenollosa (1853–1908) and Okakura Tenshin (1862–1913) to create a new school of painting by merging the most meaningful elements of both Western and native traditions. It can as cogently be argued that, since this was already developing, they unnecessarily polarized, and thereby impeded, the very goals they sought to advance.

As Kitazawa Noriaki perceptively observes in his wide-ranging article, it was the important new concepts that the term *Nihonga* embraced that led traditional artists to redefine the nature of their art and its role in society, along with their own sense of cultural distinction and national identity.[4]

As the two currents of eclecticism and exoticism that were so prevalent during the Meiji era gave way to a more informed awareness of Japan's cultural heritage and a more extensive knowledge of Western art, the *Nihonga* artists' technical mastery surmounted conventional constraints and their complex stylistic fusion led to the brilliant formal innovations of Taishō. For artists to have achieved so profound a transformation in the span of a single century makes these works all the more impressive.

Notes

1. Particularly interesting is the recent literature inspired by one specific collection: Victor Harris, *Japanese Imperial Craftsmen: Meiji Art from the Khalili Collection*, exh. cat. (London: British Museum, 1994); and Oliver Impey and Malcolm Fairley, *Treasures of Imperial Japan: Ceramics from the Khalili Collection*, exh. cat. (Cardiff: National Museum of Wales, 1994); and The Nasser D. Khalili Collection of Japanese Art, *Meiji no takara/Treasures of Imperial Japan*, 8 vols. (London: The Kibo Foundation, 1995).
2. *Ferdinand Hodler: Views and Visions*, exh. cat. (Zürich: The Swiss Institute for Art Research, 1994). For additional information on the subject, see: L. Ahtola-Moorhouse, et al., *Dreams of a Summer Night: Scandinavian Painting at the Turn of the Century*, exh. cat. (London: Hayward Gallery, 1986); Kirk Varnadoe, *Northern Light: Realism and Symbolism in Scandinavian Painting, 1880–1910*, exh. cat. (Brooklyn: The Brooklyn Museum, 1982); Neil Kent, *The Triumph of Light and Nature: Nordic Art, 1740–1940* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1987).
3. Alexandra Munroe, *Japanese Art After 1945: Scream Against the Sky* (New York: Abrams, 1994). The exhibition, originated by the Yokohama Museum of Art, appeared in the United States at the Guggenheim Museum SoHo, New York, in 1994 and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art in 1995.
4. Kitazawa Noriaki, "'Nihonga' gainen no keisei ni kansuru shiron" (An Essay on the Formation of the Notion of *Nihonga*) in *Meiji Nihonga shiryō* (Documents of Meiji *Nihonga*), ed. Aoki Shigeru (Tokyo: Chūō Kōron Bijutsu Shuppan, 1991): 469–534.

2.
Tradition in Transition, 1868–1890

Ellen P. Conant

As the American flotilla approached the harbor of Uraga in 1853, Commodore Matthew Perry may well have wondered which of the country's monarchs would respond to the official documents he carried requesting that Japan abandon its more than two centuries of seclusion and resume relations with the Western nations. Perry had learned from his scrupulous reading of the available literature that the reigning emperor resided in the Imperial Palace in the ancient capital of Kyoto and that the ruling shōgun governed the country from his castle in Edo.

Keenly aware of mounting economic difficulties and inadequate defenses, the shōgun had no recourse the following year but to accede to a treaty of amity and trade with the United States. Opponents of the treaty seized this opportunity to press for a larger voice in the councils of government. The shogunate struggled in vain to conciliate the court and the feudatories, to placate the foreign powers, and to appease anti-foreign elements that rallied to the throne. What began as an attempt at internal reform soon became a concerted drive to topple the shogunate that culminated in 1868 in the resumption of imperial rule and the shift of the capital to Edo, renamed Tokyo.[1]

The new Meiji government enacted sweeping political, social, and economic reforms that swiftly industrialized the country, transformed the economy, and strengthened the military. By 1890, the government had created a modern centralized state, generated a constitution, and convened its first Diet. Its principal goal was to revise the unequal treaties imposed by the foreign powers and to achieve a position of parity in the comity of nations. These far-reaching changes are mirrored in woodblocks that graphically portray the new sights, fashions, and foibles of a society in the throes of rapid modernization and Westernization.[2] This keen sense of "before" and "after" is epitomized by the Meiji Emperor, a mere youth of sixteen, who emerged from the confines of the Imperial Palace in Kyoto and, as the new symbol of authority, assumed the guise of a modern European monarch (Figures 2.1 and 2.2).

Little of this is reflected in the work of the traditional schools of Japanese painting. This could be attributed, at a superficial level, to prevailing constraints regarding appropriate subject matter and the limitations imposed by site-specific formats. It also raises fundamental questions regarding the distinction between changes in artistic styles and cultural change. As recent studies of the French Revolution reveal, artistic change rarely coincides with political events, even one as momentous as the Meiji Restoration. Furthermore, what occurred was not really a restoration or a revolution but a gradual transition which cannot be adequately delineated because it spans a little-known period of Japanese art history, namely the second and third quarters of the nineteenth century.

Activities of the painting world may outwardly appear to parallel political developments and might be presented in that light. But the motivations were strikingly dissimilar. The Meiji government was compelled to resolve pressing domestic problems and to meet daunting foreign challenges. Artists of Japanese painting circles were struggling to conserve their vaunted heritage in an unravelling social milieu and to secure their livelihood in an unsettled competitive atmosphere.

The many different schools of Japanese painting were so accomplished and admired that they seemed to weather the transition unscathed. It was rather the lives of the artists that were disrupted, to a degree that varied according to the artist's school and location. It is readily apparent from autobiographical recollections and critical statements that the early Meiji painters often failed to grasp the underlying import of their own experiences. Nowhere was this dislocation more extensive than in Tokyo; to the extent that the history of modern Japanese painting



Figure 2.1
Meiji Emperor (1852–1912) in traditional garb, January 9, 1867. Photograph.



Figure 2.2
Uchida Kyūichi. *Meiji Emperor in Western Clothes*, 1872. Aluminum print; 21×25.2 cm.

has been viewed through the prism of Tokyo, this displacement has been assumed to have been the norm. The Tokyo experience was in fact quite distinctive during both the Edo and Meiji eras. It should be also noted that less studied in this context were the events and experience in Kyoto.

Artists' Experience in Edo/Tokyo

When Tokugawa Ieyasu (1543–1616) became shōgun in 1603, he was determined to distance himself from the capital. He chose the remote castle town of Edo, which, like Washington, D.C., was turned into a seat of government. It soon attracted the commercial and artisan classes needed to maintain the huge bureaucracy that exercised strict control over the political, economic, and social functioning of some 250 feudatories. Official ranks were further enlarged by the imposition of the *sankin kōtai*, a regulation that required the *daimyō* lords to spend every other year in Edo, leaving their families as hostages when they returned to their domains. By the late eighteenth century, Edo was the most populous city in the world, boasting well over one million inhabitants; yet the holdings of the central bureaucracy and the provincial lords were so extensive that the commoner class, which comprised half the population, occupied a bare fifth of the city.[3]

Edo was irrevocably altered when the shogunate decided in 1862 to relax the *sankin kōtai*; the ensuing exodus led to widespread unemployment and economic decline. The situation immeasurably worsened in 1868, when the shōgun and his retainers departed and the half-million townsmen who remained wondered whether Edo would "become merely another provincial city—a remote outpost, even, as it had been before 1600."[4] The city's population did not reach the previous level until about 1890. It was this mass departure of the population who had been their principal patrons that exacted such a toll of the Kanō artists attached to the shogunate and domains and, to a lesser degree, artists of other schools.

Official painters to the shogunate since the fifteenth century and exemplars of artistic conservatism, artists of the Kanō school were ill-equipped by experience and training to fend for themselves in the new capital of Tokyo. It is difficult to gauge the full impact of the Restoration upon their careers since it is often difficult to distinguish fact from fiction. Their lot can be likened to that of the samurai, in that how they fared seems to have depended as much upon their status and political connections as their artistic ability. Many Kanō artists were engaged by the various ministries, where they often worked alongside Western-style artists: for example, both Kanō Tanbi (1840–1893) and Hashimoto Gahō were employed for many years by the Ministry of the Navy.

Others found a new outlet for their traditional role as connoisseurs and antiquarians by serving in the Museum Bureau (Hakubutsukyoku) and other key agencies responsible for the preservation and display of valued artworks. They also acted as consultants to officials, collectors, and foreigners eager to partake of the dispersal and redistribution of some of the nation's art treasures. It was not Kanō Eitoku's (1814–1891) role as a painter but his expertise in authenticating ancient paintings that led Ernest Fenollosa (1853–1908) to consult and study with him and other experts such as Yamana Tsurayoshi (1836–1902) of the Sumiyoshi school and the Tosa artist Kawasaki Chitora (1835–1902).

The lower-ranking Kanō artists worked as "town painters" (*machi eshi*) who catered for the most part to a commoner class that included wealthy, cultured, and discriminating men. Neither the artists nor their patrons were bound to adhere to the tenets of a given school. The artists freely used the very sound technical training they had received to explore the styles and themes of other schools and to commingle them as suited their purpose. Nowhere is this more evident than in the life and work of Kawanabe Kyōsai who combined his *ukiyo-e* and Kanō training to produce a most diverse and brilliant body of work (Plates 8–13). Kyōsai was well known and widely patronized by members of the foreign community—the British architect Josiah Conder was for many years his pupil—and through them he undoubtedly had ready access to Western books and illustrations.

Another noted painter active during the transition from Edo to Meiji who

emerged from this same background was Kikuchi Yōsai (1788–1878), who enriched his basic Kanō training by drawing on a truly eclectic array of styles that won him an award at the Philadelphia Centennial Exhibition in 1876. Like Kyōsai, he is now being resurrected, but his many contemporaries who figured prominently during the 1870s and 1880s in the ranking lists of artists (*banzuke*) issued by Tokyo art and book dealers remain relatively unknown.[5]

The school of art most intimately associated with Edo was *ukiyo-e*, which drew its principal subject matter from the pleasure quarters, the only places where, in an era of strict class divisions, money and taste rather than class prevailed. Stylistically dependant upon other schools of art, *ukiyo-e* prints and paintings found an audience throughout the country. Artists of this school survived for a time by enlarging their repertoire to include the activities of foreigners in Nagasaki and Yokohama and the many new sights and fashions in Tokyo that excited the curiosity of the Japanese, but eventually the late *ukiyo-e* artists found it difficult to compete with the new printing and photographic processes. Some of them found employment as illustrators for newspapers and journals and gained new fame through their illustrations of popular novels and other literary works, as did the two most noted artists, Tsukioka Yoshitoshi (1839–1892) and Kobayashi Kiyochika (1847–1915). *Ukiyo-e* painting found worthy heirs in Kaburaki Kiyokata, Uemura Shōen, Itō Shinsui (1898–1972), and Takehisa Yumeji (1884–1934), who brought these traditions into the mainstream of *Nihonga*.

The experience of *nanga* artists was different. In fact, during the transition from Edo to Meiji, they found their patronage enlarged by appreciative members of the Meiji government and the city's new cultured elite. Two of the most popular Tokyo artists of early Meiji to emerge from this ambiance were Araki Kanpo and Taki Katei (1830–1901), whose complex style incorporated elements of Western art. Many *nanga* artists from Kansai and elsewhere moved to Tokyo, including several women artists such as Okuhara Seiko (1837–1913); Atomi Kakei (1840–1926), who founded a girls' school; and Noguchi Shōhin (1847–1917), who taught painting to the daughters of the Meiji Emperor. Most of these artists became members of the Japan Art Association (Nihon Bijutsu Kyōkai) and continued to find favor with both court and official circles.

Kyoto and the Traditional Schools of Japanese Painting

Kyoto, which had been the capital for more than a millennium when Perry arrived, presented a very different situation. Despite the ravages of recurrent strife, the capital had remained a center of industry, commerce, and culture. Kyoto benefitted by its proximity to Osaka, the leading commercial city and port, and Ōtsu, where trade routed from the hinterlands reaching to the Japan Sea converged with the two principal land routes, Tōkaidō and Nakasendō. The Tokugawa shogunate imposed strict regulations on the imperial court which consisted of the emperor, his consorts, and some 140 families of nobles. Although the emperor served as a legitimating symbol, he had ceased to exercise an effective political role in the fourteenth century. Barred by the shogunate from the political fray, Kyoto was an oasis of tranquillity and courtly elegance, whose cultural arbiters and most prestigious patrons were the imperial court. With the very adequate means provided by the shogunate, these nobles led lives of idle refinement devoted to the cultivation of the arts, the revival of ancient court rites, and an endless round of court ceremonies.

Virtually all the schools of Japanese painting had originated in Kyoto and been subject to the enduring dominance of the court. Since the many successive schools of Japanese painting did not replace each other but coexisted right up to the Restoration, a brief historical review is essential to an understanding of the complex structure of painting circles at the time when Japan reluctantly resumed relations with the Western world. The earliest school of painting that still persisted was *Yamato-e*, which was an expression of the highly refined court culture of the Heian period (794–1185). Its integration of Near Eastern and Western as well as Chinese and Korean influences produced an elegant tradition of religious and secular painting that became the classical ideal of subsequent generations. The Kanō

school, an official academy attached to the shogunate, was founded by Kanō Masanobu (1434–1530), who combined the narrative tradition of *Yamato-e* and Chinese academic painting. Still another school of painting attached to the imperial court, the Tosa, portrayed Japanese literary subjects in the traditional *Yamato-e* style.

An increasing number of new schools emerged during the Edo period, the earliest of which was Rinpa. Originated by such gifted artists as Tawaraya Sōtatsu (d.1643?) and Ogata Kōrin (1658–1716), who rendered the themes of Heian art in brilliant stylized forms executed in bright colors and lavish gold and silver, Rinpa appealed to wealthy and sophisticated patrons. Another major school of painting that rose to dominance during the eighteenth century was *nanga*, which reflected the pronounced Confucian orientation of the educated elite throughout the country. It drew upon Chinese literati painting of the Yuan, Ming, and Qing dynasties transmitted by means of imported books and artworks, as well as by artists, Confucian scholars, and Buddhist priests, all entering Japan via Nagasaki.

The first of the new schools to emerge in the eighteenth century was the Mochizuki school, founded by Mochizuki Gyokusen (1692–1755) who, weary of the conventionalism of Tosa painting, created a new style that was influenced by the work of Sesshū and by Ming academic painting then reaching Japan via Nagasaki. Undoubtedly the most popular school in Kyoto during the second half of the century was created by Maruyama Ōkyo (1733–1795), who rejected the sterility of Kanō academicism and drew on the same influx of Chinese art and the realism of Western art which likewise entered through Nagasaki. Ōkyo attracted so many gifted pupils that Maruyama painting became the dominant tradition in Kyoto up to the Restoration and, in the view of Sasaki Jōhei, laid the foundation of contemporary *Nihonga*.[6] His ablest pupil, Goshun (1752–1811), merged the expressive and lyrical qualities of the *nanga* artist and poet Yosa no Buson (1716–1783) with the technical mastery, decorative beauty, and realism derived from Ōkyo to form the Shijō school which thereafter overlapped but competed with Maruyama. Still another variant, the Kishi school, was developed by Ganku (1749–1838), who gradually evolved a vigorous and forceful style influenced by the realistic tradition of Nagasaki painting. The Hara school was founded by Hara Zaichū (1750–1837), who combined elements of Kanō, Tosa, Ming, Qing, and Maruyama to create a rather delicate but decorative style of figure painting that was admirably suited to the needs of the court. Finally, the court's continuing preoccupation with ancient art and ritual inevitably encouraged a more informed antiquarianism and a revival of Heian cults which contributed to the development of *fukko Yamato-e* (restored *Yamato-e*), whose most brilliant exponent, Reizei Tamechika (1823–1864), was a victim of Restoration intrigue.

Kyoto in Early Meiji

Kyoto did not entirely escape the disruption and destruction that accompanied the Restoration. Chōshū's brief attack on the Imperial Palace gates in 1864 started a blaze that destroyed the entire center of Kyoto and forced many artists to take refuge with patrons and friends in adjacent areas such as Lake Biwa. Both artists and artisans were soon enlisted, however, to help rebuild the city and refurbish Nijō Castle, the *daimyō* mansions, and other important structures needed to accommodate the shōgun and his entourage, the leading *daimyō*, and other important figures who converged on Kyoto to vie for power. Kyoto was jubilant when the imperial cause prevailed and the threat of physical violence was averted, but this soon gave way to grave apprehension when the court and capital moved to Tokyo.

The immediate ill effects of this loss were mitigated by the economic expansion of the 1860s and the astute economic measures instituted by the first governor, Nagatani Nobuatsu (1818–1902), former head of the Peers School (Gakushūin), and Makimura Masanao (1834–1896), a Chōshū samurai, who between them governed Kyoto from 1868 to 1881. They secured a parting gift of 150,000 yen from the court, which they used to assist the traditional industries and to establish a wide range of educational and industrial projects that paralleled, and even anticipated, those of the Meiji government. Between 1870 and 1872 they founded a center for the study

of foreign languages and technical subjects, a chemical research laboratory, and a library, institutions which were among the new sites depicted by Mori Kansai (Plate 15).[7] They engaged a number of able foreign employees to implement these projects and to help them reorganize the Nishijin textile industry by introducing new materials and methods of manufacture, including Jacquard looms imported from Lyon. They also took steps to improve the quality of dyes and the production of pottery, lacquer, cloisonné, and other crafts, all of which were vital to the economy of the city.

Makimura's slogan, "Enrich the country through the arts" (*bijutsu fukoku*), led him to initiate other ventures that might promote trade. He was ably assisted by the members of Joun-sha under the leadership of Shiokawa Bunrin, an exceedingly capable artist who was one of the innovative figures of early Meiji. Makimura also relied on Léon Dury (1822–1891), who had accompanied the Japanese delegates to the Paris Exposition of 1867, and other foreign employees to help organize a fair in 1871 that proved little more than an art exhibition dominated by the Ming and Qing *nanga* paintings so popular with local collectors.[8] The following year he held the first Kyoto Exposition (*Kyoto hakurankai*), a full-scale industrial exposition, well in advance of Tokyo, that attracted some 40,000 Japanese, including the Meiji Emperor, and a reputed 770 foreigners.

Partly because of the character of the city and its industries, and the role that the arts had played in its development, artists and entrepreneurs dominated these expositions to a greater extent than would have been possible in Tokyo. Exhibitions of both traditional and contemporary arts and crafts were from the outset an integral part of the Kyoto Expositions, which were soon held biannually. Prizes were first awarded in the spring of 1875 by a judges' panel of noted figures from each field. Kyoto thus was well prepared to participate actively in international expositions, particularly that of Vienna, where its traditional art industries won many awards. Several of the craftsmen who exhibited, as well as many other artisans, were provided the means to study and travel abroad and to bring back valuable reference materials.

The products shown at the successive Kyoto Expositions represented the progress of old, established firms, the bulk of whose trade was domestic and who therefore had to contend with contemporary standards of taste and the critical appraisal of a discerning Kyoto public. As a result, new knowledge and experimentation was channelled into adaptations attuned to markets that remained primarily domestic. Kyoto painters were exposed to similar influences and constraints.

The prizes awarded to Kyoto artists and craftsmen at the first Domestic Industrial Exposition (*Naikoku kangyō hakurankai*) held in Ueno Park in Tokyo in 1877 provide ample proof that, a decade after the Restoration, Kyoto's position as a center of the arts, purveyor to the court, and producer of quality merchandise had in no wise been diminished. Nishimura Sōzaemon's experimentation with the *yūzen* process won him a prize for a *yūzen* printed on velvet. This exploit so caught the fancy of Japanese and foreigners alike that it gave rise to a vogue for *birōdo yūzen* which persisted through the early 1900s (Plates 41 and 42). Craftsmen eager to exploit the new potentials of their medium made possible by the adoption of Western materials and methods turned to artists for designs of a more elaborate nature. Many prominent Kyoto artists cooperated with notable success because their style of painting lent itself to the demands of the decorative arts. The popularity of literati painting, *bunjin-ga*, briefly created a vogue for *bunjin-ga yūzen* based on designs furnished by some of the leading *nanga* painters of Kyoto.

It became apparent to officials and entrepreneurs that designs of a traditional nature were more appealing to informed Japanese taste and to discriminating foreigners than the pseudo-Western imitations that attracted the artistically untutored who saw these objects as tangible proof of Japan's rapid modernization and technical skill. Thus, the knowledge possessed by the masters of the traditional schools of Japanese painting came to be regarded as a national resource that the government would do well to nurture and develop. Makimura therefore welcomed the opportunity in 1878 to engage Gottfried Wagener (1831–1892), whose scientific

knowledge and artistic discernment ideally suited his needs. After the Vienna Exposition, Wagener had accompanied the government official Sano Tsunetami (1822–1902) on a study tour of European museums and art schools and submitted a report in 1875 recommending that an art school be established in conjunction with the national museum; however, the Meiji government did not see fit at that time to take his advice. Makimura lacked the funds to found a museum but provided for the display of sample materials purchased abroad and evidently heeded Wagener's recommendation to found an art school.

Wagener took advantage of his stay in Kyoto to study Japanese painting which he hoped would provide the basis for a new repertoire of decorative motifs. He frequented the studios of the Kyoto painters and often asked them to furnish him with designs for ceramics and lacquer. He was particularly friendly with Mochizuki Gyokusen (1834–1913), a prominent painter and descendant of the founder of the Mochizuki school, closely affiliated with Kyoto officials. It is surely no coincidence that Wagener was resident in Kyoto when Makimura established in 1880 the first government school to offer training in all branches of Japanese painting as well as Western art, presumably on the basis of recommendations submitted to him in 1878 by the *nanga* painter Tanomura Chokunyū (1814–1907). Those recommendations were endorsed by Mochizuki Gyokusen, Kose Shōseki (1843–1919), Kōno Bairei and Kubota Beisen. The Kyoto-Prefecture Painting School (Kyoto-fu Gagakkō) was established through the close cooperation of local officials and art circles and was carefully attuned to the needs of Kyoto's traditional industries. Private contributions supported the school, which only later secured government funding. The school encompassed all of Kyoto painting, including *nanga* and *yōga*. In the Kyoto school, the distinction between *Nihonga* and *yōga* was less rigid than in Tokyo. Indeed, one of the teachers of *yōga*, Tamura Sōryū (1846–1918), continued to paint *Nihonga* (Figure 2.3). Despite draft deferment, scholarships, and other enticements, only seventeen students applied; even after waiving the most minimal requirements, the opening enrollment fell far short of a projected student body of eighty. This contrasted sharply with the number of students clamoring for admission to government schools in other fields and is graphic confirmation of the viability of the Kyoto schools of painting and the power wielded by their more prominent members, who had many more pupils attending their private schools.



Figure 2.3
Tamura Sōryū (Gesshō), 1846–1918. *Dragon King* (Zennyo ryūō zu), 1873. Hanging scroll: color on silk; 89.9×42.6 cm. Kyoto National Museum.

Another vital force for renewal in Kyoto too often overlooked was the effort of enlightened priests to counter the government's proscription of Buddhism by reforming their basic institutions and adopting new programs and ideas derived from the study of Western religions. The two principal temples of the Shin sect in Kyoto, Higashi Honganji and Nishi Honganji, sent Buddhist scholars to study abroad who could contribute to the renovation of Buddhism and open new fields for Buddhist scholarship. The study of Sanskrit and early Buddhist texts was first introduced to Japan by Nanjō Bunyū (1849–1927) who had been sent by Higashi Honganji in 1876 to study under Max Muller at Oxford. These studies subsequently provided Meiji artists with new subject matter for Buddhist painting and continued the close relationship that existed between the painters and the Buddhist clergy, who engaged them to renew and redecorate their temples.

These Buddhist initiatives coincided with a Western interest in Asian religion and culture. In 1876, the Lyon industrialist Émile Guimet, accompanied by the artist Felix Régamey, travelled to the East to investigate the religious thought and practice of Japan, China, and India. A senior official in the Ministry of Education, Kuki Ryūichi (1852–1931), arranged for them to visit Nikkō, Ise, and numerous smaller temples en route to Kyoto where Makimura organized a series of meetings with Shintō priests and heads of various Buddhist sects. It is quite possible that Kōno Bairei's unusual pairing of Shintō and Buddhist themes (Plate 16) was painted in connection with these meetings, which also were portrayed in paintings by Régamey now in the possession of the Musée Guimet in Paris.

The Kyoto painters had been too concerned with their immediate well-being in early Meiji to take advantage of this period of intellectual and social ferment to explore new art forms and methods of painting. The greater social stability of

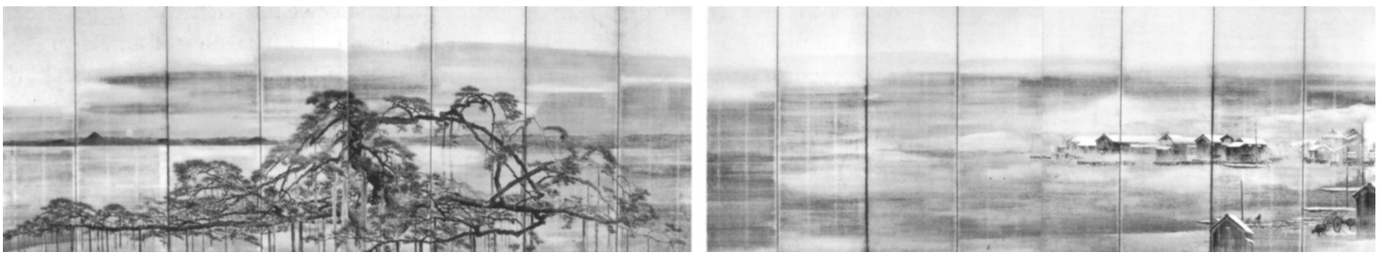


Figure 2.4
Kishi Chikudō, 1826–1897. *Scenes of Ōtsu and Karasaki* (Ōtsu/Karasaki zu), c.1876. Pair of eight-panel screens: ink and light color on paper; 158×422 cm. each. Private collection.

Kyoto and the assurance of continued patronage gradually gave these artists the leeway to experiment and innovate. The Kyoto artists likewise seemed better able to internalize and creatively transmute new ideas, both native and foreign. A pair of monumental eight-panel screens by Kishi Chikudō, *Scenes of Ōtsu and Karasaki*, c.1876 (Figure 2.4), embodies a pictorial synthesis rarely achieved. Even Bairei, a gifted teacher but quite conventional artist, engagingly depicted that same year the new railroad station and a train puffing its way towards Ōtsu. His representation the following year of the traditional theme of *Fireworks over the River* (Figure 2.5) is remarkably akin to a contemporary painting by Whistler. A red chalk drawing of a young woman shows that he also explored Western art forms, as did so many other artists of the period. (Unfortunately, these three works by Bairei cannot be traced today.) Kubota Beisen's bold rendering of *Pine Trees and Autumn Leaves* (Plate 19) is stylistically well in advance of its period and reveals that the artist worked in a remarkable range of styles.

Because of the close relationship that existed among artists, artisans, and entrepreneurs, Kyoto was able to meet the demands of an expanding domestic market and the potential for foreign trade in a more integrated and coherent manner. Dyers, weavers, and *gofuku-ya* (traditional kimono merchants) turned to Chikudō, Bairei, Imao Keinen (1845–1924), Morikawa Sobun (1847–1902), and many other artists for new designs that would enable them to exploit fully the new *yūzen* techniques, more complex cut-velvet textiles, mechanized looms, and a host of other developments. It is indicative of the distorted views of later writers that such mutually constructive relationships should have been regarded as demeaning labor which reflected the impoverished condition of the artist in early Meiji. That so ambitious and able a young artist as Takeuchi Seihō should have allied himself with the Iida brothers of Takashimaya rather than remain subservient to his teacher Bairei suggests the real challenges such employment offered, to say nothing of the important patronage these entrepreneurs could provide.

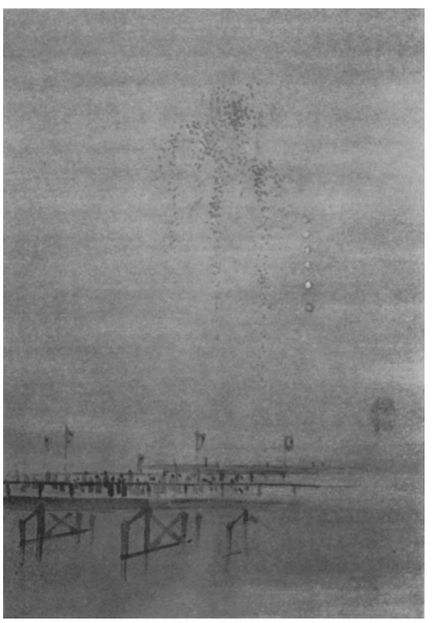


Figure 2.5
Kōno Bairei, 1844–1895. *Fireworks over the River* (Fukusui enka zu), 1878. Album: color on paper; 17.3 ×11.8 cm. Whereabouts unkown; reproduced in *Bairei iboku* (Ink painting by Bairei), 1940.

Kyoto artists were also more conscious of the need to produce paintings that were stylistically and thematically well adapted to the formats imposed by Japanese traditional architecture—sliding doors, *fusuma*, screens, hanging scrolls, and even such small works as *shikishi* and *tanzaku*. *Fusuma* were commonly reserved for official or religious buildings and when employed for domestic purposes had to be thematically neutral. Screens were usually reserved for specific occasions and therefore could depict a far wider range of subjects in more innovative styles. Hanging scrolls were still relegated to the *tokonoma* (painting alcoves) and changed according to the season and occasion, so that a family or a traditional establishment of some means needed a considerable number of paintings. For smaller rooms and people of modest means, there were hanging scrolls into which one could insert *shikishi* and *tanzaku*, thereby allowing a similar rotation of appropriate subject matter. Since traditional architecture remained the norm for most domestic residences and private enterprises, *yōga* artists were at a disadvantage that further inhibited their ability to compete with *Nihonga* during this period.

The National Government's Involvement with Arts

The ruling authorities of Edo/Tokyo faced very different problems. In the late Edo period, the measures taken by the shogunate to provide training in Western-style art were not based upon aesthetic considerations but upon the pragmatic recogni-

tion that mechanical drawing, drafting, and other related skills were essential for the development of industry, technology, armaments and many trades. In 1856, the shogunate assigned a scholar of Dutch studies, Kawakami Tōgai (1827–1881), attached to the Institute of Barbarian Studies (Bansho Shirabesho) to investigate Western methods of drawing and painting. In 1861, he began to teach these skills to samurai, scholars, and some Kanō artists assigned by the shogunate that included Takahashi Yuichi (1828–1894) and Kanō Tomonobu (1843–1912).[9] After the Restoration, he continued to train young men seeking employment as draftsmen, cartographers, and illustrators, as well as teachers needed for the course in pencil drawing that was made part of the curriculum of the first nationwide system of elementary schools established in 1872.

In 1876, the Meiji government invited a painter, a sculptor, and an architectural draftsman from Italy to teach at the Technical Art School (Kōbu Bijutsu Gakkō) which was founded in conjunction with the architectural course offered by the Imperial College of Engineering. The school has been faulted for merely imparting skills of immediate need to the government rather than training artists, as many of the teachers and their pupils had hoped.[10] The failure to place the school on a permanent footing in 1883 was due to the concerted efforts of Kuki Ryūichi and a faction in the Ministry of Education determined to postpone the establishment of an art school until they could be assured of its control. This bred a partisanship that was to have an adverse effect upon the development of Meiji art which was not engendered by the artists themselves.

Another locus for the study of Western art that inadvertently fostered the study of Japanese art was the Printing Bureau of the Ministry of Finance, which in 1874 engaged an Italian engraver, Edoardo Chiossone (1832–1898), to produce banknotes, stamps, and official papers and to train the artists in their employ. Many of them had been traditional painters, as was Ishii Teiko (1848–1897), who thereafter worked privately in both media. In his search for native imagery, Chiossone became interested in the ancient art of Japan. He encouraged the director, Tokunō Ryōsuke (1825–1883), to conduct a four-and-a-half-month research trip in the spring of 1878 to record major monuments and noted works of ancient art by means of photographs and drawings that were subsequently published, all prior to the advent of Ernest F. Fenollosa who invariably is credited with initiating such activities. In 1880 Chiossone also produced albums with deluxe reproductions of Ise Shrine and the Shōsōin treasury at Tōdaiji Temple in Nara, thereby stimulating interest in Japan's artistic heritage and facilitating the production of illustrated art books and journals that fostered a greater appreciation of Japanese art both within the country and abroad. Although seemingly peripheral, all these developments had a direct effect upon contemporary painting circles.

The early Meiji artists in Tokyo were more directly influenced by the activities of a group of government officials who, through their activities in the various ministries and participation in domestic and international expositions, had a decisive influence upon all the arts. Machida Hisanari, Sano Tsunetami, Kawase Hideharu, Yamataka Nobuakira, Nōtomi Kaijirō, Shioda Shin, and many other officials who established Ryūchi-kai and later dominated the Japan Art Association were responsible for the establishment of most of the major art institutions and organizations; for selecting and subsidizing art that was sent abroad; for funding Japanese craftsmen and *yōga* artists to travel and study abroad; for purchasing foreign materials as samples for Japanese craftsmen to study; for gathering information on foreign institutions and policies; and for compiling records of foreign reaction to Japanese exhibits. A better understanding of their individual roles and differing views is essential to a fuller comprehension of this period.

The exhibitions they sponsored enabled both artists and the public to view a far wider range of ancient art than could have been seen at temple airings, festivals, and official events. They were regarded as an important means of improving the taste of the public and a source that could provide new ideas for craftsmen and a wider repertoire of styles for the artists. Some of the older works of art that were exhibited soon changed hands as a result of the dissolution of ranks and domains,

the disestablishment of Buddhism, and a wide range of social and economic dislocation. Antique dealers, mounters, booksellers, and other traditional purveyors of art were quick to acquire any important works that might unexpectedly be offered for sale. Meiji officials such as Inoue Kaoru, who had an opportunity to observe Western patterns of collecting while studying abroad, became avid collectors, as did leading statesmen such as Matsukata Masayoshi and the industrialist Masuda Takashi.

Other collectors active at this time were Westerners who would bring their knowledge and collections to the West. Among the first to compile a systematic account of Japanese painting and to acquire a wide assortment of works of different periods was William Anderson (1842–1900), a British physician who taught at the Japanese Naval Academy. Upon Anderson's return to England, his collection was acquired by the British Museum in 1881 for an impressive sum, and he received an appointment as curator responsible for its publication. A paper presented by Anderson to the Asiatic Society of Japan in 1879, entitled "The History of Japanese Art," apparently encouraged others to take a greater interest in painting, particularly the young Ernest Fenollosa who had arrived from America in the fall of 1878 to teach philosophy at the newly established Tokyo University. Although there is reason to believe that paintings were then less costly than other, more sought-after wares, Fenollosa, a thwarted student of painting with no private means, could ill afford to study and acquire such numerous and varied works merely for his own personal pleasure. By 1882, however, uncertain how many times his two-year contract with the University would be renewed and anxious to secure suitable employment on his return to Boston, Fenollosa followed Anderson's example and aggressively set about assembling a consciously comprehensive collection of Japanese paintings that he hoped to sell to the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston.

It is doubtful that Fenollosa could have accomplished his collection without the eager participation and ample means of William Sturgis Bigelow (1850–1926). Seeking to redeem the seven idle years he spent in Japan eluding his father's insistence that he practice surgery, Bigelow amassed a large and diverse collection of Japanese art to bequeath to the Boston museum, where in 1889 he succeeded his father as a trustee.[11] Bigelow wrote to family and friends in Boston boasting of the bargains that were available, their certain rise in value, and his willingness to make purchases on their behalf. He also encouraged a stream of prominent visitors, such as Isabella Stewart Gardner, to collect Japanese paintings, and numerous other Bostonians then resident in Japan followed his example and bequeathed their paintings and art objects to the museum.[12]

It was undoubtedly in pursuit of these goals that Fenollosa, with funds furnished by Bigelow, established Kanga-kai in 1884 to exhibit their paintings and thereby encourage others to bring their works for authentification and possible purchase. They engaged Kanō Hōgai and Hashimoto Gahō on monthly retainers to sketch, record, and generally assist them. It was only a matter of time before Fenollosa felt impelled to convey his views on painting to a number of artists willing to follow his precepts. Why artists with such impeccable credentials as Hōgai and Gahō should have accepted such employment and attempted to paint according to his tenets is difficult to comprehend, particularly since this collaboration produced some paintings of dubious distinction (Figure 2.6); it did, however, also result in works such as Hōgai's *The Compassionate Kannon*, 1888 (Figure 2.7), which has become a major icon of Meiji painting. Fenolossa's alliance with Hōgai and Gahō is all the more surprising since neither of these artists had exhibited any particular interest in Western art or displayed any impulse to experiment beyond the tenets of their tradition, as is evident from the three early paintings by Hōgai (Plates 14, 21, 22).

There is no question that Fenollosa and his colleague Okakura Tenshin stimulated a greater interest in earlier schools of painting, historical and Buddhist themes, and a more self-conscious effort to create an art that could embody a growing sense of national identity and command international acclaim. This was to become the program of the Tokyo School of Fine Arts (Tokyo Bijutsu Gakkō), and thus a major



Figure 2.6
Kanō Hōgai, 1828–1888. *Guardian Holding Ogres* (Niō sokki), 1886. Hanging scroll: color on paper; 123.6× 63.4 cm. Private collection.

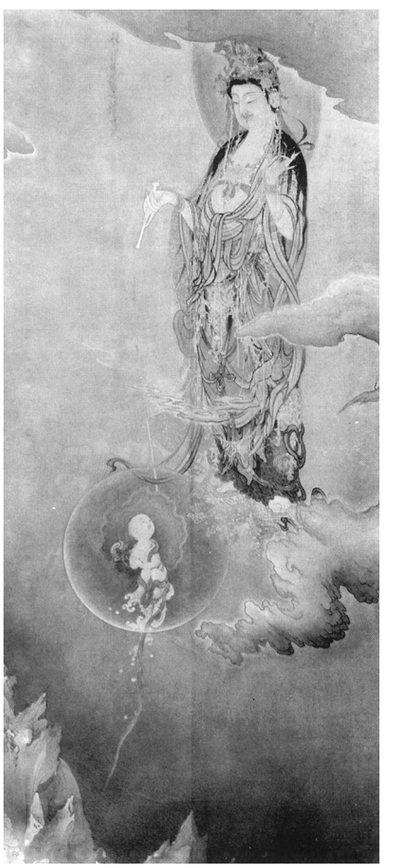


Figure 2.7
Kanō Hōgai, 1828–1888. *The Compassionate Kannon* (Hibo Kannon), 1888. Hanging scroll: color on paper; 196×86.5 cm. Art Museum, Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music.

current in the development of *Nihonga*, that has yet to be adequately explored and reevaluated.

Notes:

1. See W.G. Beasley, *The Meiji Restoration* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1972).
2. See Julia Meech-Pekarik, *The World of the Meiji Print* (New York: Weatherhill, 1986).
3. See Edward Seidensticker, *Low City, High City: Tokyo from Edo to the Earthquake* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1983): 12–16.
4. Seidensticker, *Low City, High City*: 24.
5. The *banzuke* rankings issued by Tokyo dealers span the entire Meiji era, and while allowances must be made for the biases of dealers, certain names recur with sufficient frequency to provide a measure of reliability.
6. Sasaki Jōhei, "The Formation and Development of Japanese Painting Schools" in *Fenway Court* (Boston: Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, 1992): 46.
7. The right screen depicts the library (Shūshoin) and the first middle school which stood where the Kyoto Prefectural Office is now located. The companion screen shows the first iron bridge to span the Kamo River and a new hot springs inn erected in Higashiyama.
8. See Kyoto Hakurankai-kyoku, *Kyoto hakurankai-shi ryaku* (A Brief History of Kyoto Expositions), (Kyoto, 1895): 8–11. For a list of the paintings and other art objects exhibited, see Kōbe Gen'emon et al., *Kyoto hakurankai shuppin mokuroku* (Kyoto Exposition Catalogue), (Kyoto, 1872).
9. John M. Rosenfield, "Western Style Painting in the Early Meiji Period and Its Critics" in *Tradition and Modernization in Japanese Culture*, ed. Donald H. Shively (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976): 184–201.
10. For a more extensive account of these developments, see Ellen P. Conant, "Principles and Pragmatism: The *Yatoi* in the Field of Art" in *Foreign Employees in Nineteenth-Century Japan*, ed. Edward R. Beauchamp and Akira Iriye (Boulder: Westview Press, 1990): 137–70.
11. Jan Fontein, "Notes on the History of the Collections" in *Asiatic Art in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston* (Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, 1982): 6–16; and Walter Muir Whitehill, *The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston: A Centennial History* (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 1970). Bigelow evidently relied extensively on Fenollosa for the purchase of paintings and thereby undoubtedly subsidized his purchases, but took the precaution of dividing the ownership of many pairs of screens between them, possibly to obligate Fenollosa to sell them to someone who, like Bigelow, would donate them to the Museum of Fine Arts. Bigelow persuaded a fellow physician and heir to a China trade fortune, Charles Goddard Weld, to purchase Fenollosa's collection of paintings, and although they were deposited in the museum, along with his collection, in 1886, both collections were not formally bequeathed to the museum until 1911.
12. Murakata Akiko, "Selected Letters of Dr. William Sturgis Bigelow," Ph.d. diss. (Washington, D.C.: The George Washington University, 1971): 57–68, containing Letter No. 13, dated September 30, 1883 to Bigelow's closest friend, Henry Cabot Lodge.

3.
The Tokyo School of Fine Arts and the Development of *Nihonga*, 1889–1906

Ellen P. Conant

In 1889, the Tokyo School of Fine Arts (Tokyo Bijutsu Gakkō) was opened under the authority of the Ministry of Education as a government-accredited art school to train art teachers for the schools and designers for craft industries, as well as professional painters, sculptors, and craftsmen.[1] This was perceived by art circles at large as a threat, prompting them to coalesce and form organizations that could better meet this challenge. What might appear to be partisan groups actually proved in the aggregate an important stimulus to the development of *Nihonga* during the latter part of the Meiji era.

Okakura Tenshin and the Tokyo School of Fine Arts

The opening of the school coincided with the adoption on February 18, 1889 of traditional brush drawing (*mōhitsu-ga*) to replace the pencil drawing (*enpitsu-ga*) that had been taught in the elementary schools since their establishment in 1872. These courses had been taught primarily by Western-style artists who could not otherwise earn an adequate living. They therefore took the Western drawing test for admission to a course at the Tokyo School that would enable them to meet the new requirements of the Ministry of Education. Yokoyama Taikan took the less competitive test in brush drawing, which he was able to pass after just two to three months' training with Yūki Masaaki (1834–1904), who soon became a teacher at the school.

The school's principal, Okakura Tenshin (1862–1913), found it difficult to reconcile the differences in educational background, artistic training, and technical skill of the entering class. The graduates of the new educational system were academically more advanced but technically less skilled than those who had studied *Nihonga*, which was the only course of painting that the school offered. When a test was given to divide the class, Taikan and others who were demoted complained to Tenshin and three months later were given another test that reversed the order. It is difficult to imagine what the criteria could have been that led to the demotion of such highly trained students as Shimomura Kanzan and four other pupils of Kanō Hōgai, three of whom resigned in anger. Such difficulties were to remain endemic throughout the early years of the school and highlight the problems involved in formulating a curriculum, determining levels of competence, and establishing criteria for awarding prizes.

During the first year and a half, Ernest F. Fenollosa (1853–1908) taught a theoretical course on the principles of art that the students found irksome. He had envisioned having a continuing role in the guidance of the school and had purchased property in Koishikawa on which to build a house. When his contract was not renewed in 1890, he had no recourse but to return to Boston, where he became the first curator of the Japanese Department of the Museum of Fine Arts. The leading professor of painting was Hashimoto Gahō, who was responsible for further developing the synthesis of Eastern and Western elements that he and Hōgai had achieved under the tutelage of Fenollosa (Plate 23). However, Gahō on his own had shown little interest in Western art, whereas several other teachers actually had some training and experience. Like many Kanō artists during early Meiji, Yūki Masaaki had studied engraving and had supported himself as a copper engraver and printmaker. Kanō Tomonobu (1843–1912) had studied *yōga* with Kawakami Tōgai (1828–1881) and had worked thereafter as a Western-style artist, teaching at the preparatory school of Tokyo Imperial University and working as a technical illustrator in the science department. The other leading painting professor, Kawabata Gyokushō, a native of Kyoto, briefly studied *yōga* in Edo; he was a highly successful painter who attracted many pupils eager to master the Maruyama



Figure 3.1
Hishida Shunsō, 1874–1911. Copy of *Samantabhadra, Deity of Longevity* (Fugen enmei zu). Hanging scroll: color on silk; 106.5×62.8 cm. Tokyo National Museum.

tradition which had long ago successfully merged Japanese and Western art elements (Plate 24). A subsequent addition to the staff who likewise came from Kyoto was Kose Shōseki (1843–1919), a descendant of an ancient line of Buddhist painters. He had studied Kishi and Shijō painting, as well as *nanga*, and evolved a highly eclectic style that incorporated elements of Western art. After visiting China, he had taught at the Kyoto-Prefecture Painting School (Kyoto-fu Gagakkō) before going to Tokyo.

Although Tenshin wished to foster a more innovative form of *Nihonga*, as compared to the presumed "conservatism" of the Japan Art Association (Nihon Bijutsu Kyōkai), he was inevitably influenced by his own historical interests. He taught a course on the history of Japanese art, was curator of the Tokyo Imperial Museum, had launched the illustrated art journal *Kokka* (National Flowers), and was involved in a project with Fukuchi Fukuichi (1862–1909) on behalf of the Ise Shrine to produce copies of ancient treasures. Thus his students Taikan, Hishida Shunsō, Kanzan, and others spent months in Kyoto and Nara making precise life-size copies of ancient paintings for exhibition display, which was quite different from copying them for study purposes (Figure 3.1). It is not surprising, therefore, that several members of the entering class became art experts rather than artists.

These preoccupations prompted Tenshin in 1894 to divide the painting course into Kamakura period, taught by Kose Shōseki; Muromachi and early Edo, taught by Gahō with the assistance of Kanzan; and late Edo, taught by Gyokushō. The students were encouraged to take ancient works as their models and to stress accuracy in historic details. This expressed itself in paintings derived from the narrative handscrolls of earlier periods, a concern for a more authentic rendering of Buddhist themes, and historical subjects that could capture the patriotic fervor of the country during the Sino-Japanese War of 1894–1895. Although pupils were encouraged to express their own ideas, their early work often proved to be so closely modelled on that of their teachers that Fukuchi, then a faculty member, questioned the acceptability of Hishida Shunsō's graduation painting (Figures 3.2 and 3.3).

Although Tenshin was bent on revitalizing traditional themes, formats, and formal values, he was no less influenced by the treatment of historical subjects by



Figure 3.2 (left)
Hashimoto Gahō, 1835–1908. *Miidera Temple* (Miidera), 1894. Hanging scroll: color on silk; 130.5×64 cm.



Figure 3.3 (right)
Hishida Shunsō, 1874–1911. *Widow and Orphan* (Kafu to koji), 1895. Hanging scroll: color on silk; 136×84 cm. Art Museum, Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music.

such noted French painters as Charles Gleyre, Léon Gérôme, and Gustave Boulanger. He may well have been aware of Hendrik Leys's efforts during the 1830s to create a Flemish national art, for he was certainly impressed by the accomplishments of his pupil, Sir Laurence Alma-Tadema, whom he visited in London in 1887. This highly successful painter and his artist wife resided in what was a veritable museum and the popularity of his authentically rendered scenes of Greek and Roman life must have made a deep impression.[2] Tenshin was also familiar with the work of the Pre-Raphaelites and was an admirer of Gabriel Dante Rossetti. While Tenshin wished to appeal to similar sentiments, Japanese domestic architecture, public buildings, limited museum space, and private collectors could ill accommodate some of the themes and the prodigious size of works produced under his aegis primarily for exhibition purposes, such as *Buddha Preaching* (Nenge bishō) by Shunsō and *Balmy Spring* by Saigō Kogetsu (1873–1912), both dating from 1897 (Figures 3.4).[3]



Figure 3.4
Saigō Kogetsu, 1873–1912. *Balmy Spring* (Shundan), 1897. Hanging scroll: silk on color; 70.3×271.8 cm. Art Museum, Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music.

Tenshin's conceptualization of an art based on the synthesis of Eastern and Western elements that could embody the distinctive character and national aspirations of the Japanese ran counter to the ideas and aims of Kuroda Seiki (1866–1924), whom Tenshin felt compelled by virtue of his enormous popularity to "invite" in 1896 to organize a course on *yōga*. Kuroda and his colleague Kume Keiichirō (1866–1934) had returned in the summer of 1893 from a decade in Paris where they had studied with Raphael Collin, noted for his idealized nudes executed in a meticulous technique, and also absorbed the plein-air influence of painters such as Jules Bastien-LePage. Kuroda's gregarious personality, fluency in French, prominent family connections, and ample means enabled him to establish close ties with his teacher and other European painters, to travel widely, and to become exceptionally well versed in European art. He emerged from the fourth Domestic Industrial Exposition (*Naikoku kangyō hakurankai*), where he succeeded in gaining admission for his salon painting of a nude, *Morning Toilette* (Chōshō), 1893, as the leader that the younger generation of *yōga* artists had been seeking. His impatience with the formality and hierarchical nature of traditional master-disciple relations, his camaraderie with colleagues and pupils, and his insistence upon maintaining the independence of his flourishing department must have been as disquieting for older masters such as Gahō and their pupils as his much freer style of painting.

Tenshin made another disquieting appointment in 1896 when he engaged Fukuchi to head a new department of design that he established to meet the increasing competition of design courses offered at Tokyo Higher Industrial School (Tokyo Kōtō Kōgyō Gakkō) and similar institutions established to train industrial artisans. He engendered further anxiety by proposing in 1897, during the brief tenure of his

friend Hamao Arata as Education Minister, to obtain funding for a vastly expanded program of art education and the reorganization of art institutions, preferably under the management of the Ministry of Education. Additional differences arose regarding the contents of the first official history of Japanese art that he and Fukuchi were compiling to accompany a survey exhibition of Japanese art to be shown at the Paris Exposition of 1900.[4] Kuroda and his Francophile associates responsible for the exhibition had misgivings about Tenshin's views and were convinced that the kind of exhibits that he had been instrumental in preparing for the Chicago fair of 1893 would be stylistically too eclectic and thematically too historical to be suitable for Paris.

For all of the above reasons and many more, Tenshin's critics were able, during the brief tenure of Saionji Kinmochi as Education Minister, to effect his "resignation" from all of his official positions. It is a serious discredit to Tenshin to suggest, as did Taikan, that this resulted from a mere conflict of personality or to skirt the issues as do most art historians because of Tenshin's troubled liaison with the former wife of Kuki Ryūichi (1852–1931). In fact, grave issues were involved regarding the conduct of the school and such larger concerns as art education, museum policy, Japanese art history, exposition management and planning, and, more to the point, the character and future course of *Nihonga*. It was not loyalty alone that prompted so many of the faculty and students to withdraw with Tenshin. Given the partisan factions within the school, most of them could not remain; although those who could, such as Gyokushō, soon returned to the school. Tenshin was obliged to provide a suitable alternative and he established the Japan Art Institute (Nihon Bijutsu-in) with the financial assistance of the wealthy Bostonian collector, William Sturgis Bigelow (1850–1926), who subsequently was instrumental in securing him a position as consultant to the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston. At the new school, Taikan finally had the closer relationship with Tenshin that he had long craved, and he soon began to model himself after his mentor. Taikan's dramatic portrayal of Tenshin in the guise of a wronged Chinese statesman, *Qu Yuan*, 1898 (Figure 3.5), was both a tribute to Tenshin and a forecast of the role that Taikan would play in Tokyo art circles. This indubitably advanced Taikan's career but whether it benefitted his development as a painter has yet to be ascertained. Shunsō, on the other hand, was of so different a temperament that the proximity of two such dominant figures may well have inhibited the realization of the full potential of this most gifted and sensitive young painter.



Figure 3.5
Yokoyama Taikan, 1868–1958. *Qu Yuan* (Kutsugen), 1898. Framed: color on paper; 132.7×289.7 cm. Itsukushima Shrine.

The Realignment of Art Circles

The establishment of the Tokyo School of Fine Arts seemed to galvanize both *Nihonga* and *yōga* artists to form new organizations and new means of exhibiting their work. A sense of accelerating change and a need to prove responsive to the rising expectations of artists born shortly before or after the Restoration forced established art circles to seek new solutions.

The newly reorganized and strengthened Japan Art Association was determined to assert the continuing dominance of the private schools operated by its leading

painters. Led by Taki Katei (1830–1901), in conjunction with Noguchi Yūkoku (1827–1898) and Kawabe Mitate (1838–1905), the *Nihonga* artists who had participated in the decoration of the new Imperial Palace in Tokyo in 1887 chose to display the accomplishments of their pupils by staging the Young Painters' Competitive Exhibition (*Seinen kaiga kyōshinkai*) in June 1889 under the auspices of the Association. Some four hundred paintings by young artists were shown along with examples of their teachers' works. In addition, several outstanding paintings of earlier periods were also exhibited to illustrate the peaks of Japanese artistic achievement.

The chief juror was Yamataka Nobuakira (1840–1904), who had supervised the decoration of the Imperial Palace. He took this occasion to commend the young artists for their industry and enthusiasm but faulted some for their determination to paint in an unconventional manner which he thought showed a want of good taste. He further deplored their ignorance of ancient customs, dress, and decor and critisized their faulty use of Chinese characters in the titles and signatures of their works. He admonished them to study calligraphy, to cultivate their knowledge of the past, to develop their ideas, and to improve their morals. He urged them to seek the transcendent qualities of great art in the paintings of Sesshū (1420–1506) and to observe that Maruyama Ōzui (1766–1829) in his painting of a man and a geisha had been able to endow even a woman of lowly status with nobility. As always, the young *Nihonga* artists were encouraged to go forward by looking backward.

On June 7, all of official Tokyo came to pay their respects: the royal family, the nobility, the heads of all the ministries, the privy council, elder statesmen, court advisors, ambassadors of foreign countries, the president of Tokyo Imperial University, the Director of the Imperial Museum, the governor of Tokyo, the Chief of Police, and higher-ranking employees of the Ministry of the Imperial Household and the Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce. This provides a ready roster of official Japan, either directly or peripherally, concerned with the arts. How then does this agree with the oft-repeated assertion that the establishment of the Tokyo School of Fine Arts represented the official endorsement of Fenollosa and Tenshin's views and of the art of Hōgai and Gahō?

While continuing to exhibit with the Japan Art Association, a group of these young artists led by Terasaki Kōgyō (1866–1919), Kobori Tomoto (1864–1931), and Murata Tanryō (1872–1940) formed the Japan Young Painters'Association (Nihon Seinen Kaiga Kyōkai) in 1891, which sponsored annual exhibitions that included Kyoto artists. Tenshin insinuated himself as head of the group which he renamed the Japan Painting Association (Nihon Kaiga Kyōkai) in 1896 and enlarged to include the pupils of the Tokyo School of Fine Arts. He also engaged Kōgyō and several other young artists as assistants at the Tokyo School. He extended this offer in 1897 to the Kyoto painter Takeuchi Seihō but, much as he wanted to go to Tokyo, Seihō would not consider serving as an assistant, particularly to Kawabata Gyokushō. From 1898 until its dissolution several years later, the Japan Painting Association held joint exhibitions with the Japan Art Institute. Thus, this group, known as the New Faction (*Shinpa*), which is invariably portrayed as a "progressive" force in the development of *Nihonga* was, in reality, not so disparate in artistic intent as to preclude overlapping membership in "conservative" organizations of the so-called Old Faction (*Kyūha*). Indeed, leading figures such as Tenshin and Kuki continued to play an active role in the affairs of the "conservative" Japan Art Association, which encompassed more branches of art than any other single organization and remained a dominant force up to the establishment of the Bunten by the Ministry of Education in 1907.

It is interesting in this regard to note the parallel development of young painters' exhibitions in Kyoto, where the strict observance of seniority and rank that the older generation of Kyoto artists was able to maintain directly affected the opportunities and development of younger artists. Since the Kyoto Art Association (Kyoto Bijutsu Kyōkai), organized in 1890, did not seem responsive to their needs, a group of younger artists banded together in January 1891 and drew up plans for a Kyoto Young Painters' Competitive Exhibition (*Kyoto seinen kaiga kyōshinkai*) which was

held that June. Only then did Seihō, who had played a leading role, receive top honors instead of ranking below the senior pupils of Kōno Bairei as he invariably did in other exhibitions. These artists continued to participate in the annual exhibitions of both Kyoto and Tokyo organizations and gradually garnered higher-ranking prizes. Not until after the deaths of Suzuki Hyakunen (1825–1891) in 1891, Mori Kansai in 1894, Kōno Bairei in 1895, and Kishi Chikudō in 1897 were their pupils able to become the dominant faculty members of the Kyoto-City School of Arts and Crafts (Kyoto-shi Bijutsu Kōgei Gakkō) and assume a leading role in the activities of *Nihonga* circles in Kyoto. Fortunately, the intermediary generation of artists such as Imao Keinen (1845–1924), Morikawa Sobun (1847–1902), and Suzuki Shōnen (1848–1918) were by then so well respected and patronized that they had no desire to assume such responsibilities. Moreover, Bairei complained to the Abbot of Higashi Honganji Temple in 1894 that the younger artists were so sought after by Kyoto entrepreneurs and patrons that he could not engage an assistant as he had planned for his project that the temple had commissioned.

The exclusion of *yōga* from the curriculum of the Tokyo School of Fine Arts in 1889 and the substitution of brush drawing for pencil drawing throughout the school system was sufficient to galvanize the *yōga* artists, who had attended the Technical Art School (Kōbu Bijutsu Gakkō), studied with early *yōga* masters such as Takahashi Yuichi (1828–1894), or received training abroad, to form the Meiji Art Society (Meiji Bijutsu-kai) in the spring of 1889. They received widespread support from official and intellectual circles, and accordingly elected as their first head Watanabe Kōki, the president of Tokyo Imperial University. With the behind-the-scene assistance of the Japan Art Association, they held their first exhibition that October which was attended by the empress and other notables. A surprising number of paintings was sold. The Western-style painters and sculptors were at last being accorded the full recognition as artists that had been denied them during the 1880s by those opposed to Western art on any grounds other than that of utility. A whole new school of art spawned by the government now laid claim to the right to compete on an equal footing with the other schools of Japanese art, at home and abroad. They posed a formidable challenge to artists of all schools; while this engendered institutional rivalry, the interaction was enormously beneficial to the development of late-Meiji painting.

The Meiji Art Society was overtaken by Hakuba-kai, which was organized in 1896 by Kuroda Seiki, Kume Keiichirō, and their associates. This in turn led to the reconstitution of the Meiji Art Society in 1902 as the Pacific Painting Society (Taiheiyō Gakai), which continued into modern times. These organizations all provided training and study groups and sponsored exhibitions, but the *yōga* department of the Tokyo School of Fine Arts continued nonetheless to attract many of the ablest teachers and pupils. Unlike early Meiji, when concerns about livelihood often determined choices, by late Meiji artistic preferences were the determinant. Many artists switched from *yōga* to *Nihonga* as did Kosugi Hōan; and others from *Nihonga* to *yōga*, as did Wada Eisaku (1874–1959) and Yamamoto Hōsui (1850–1906). Still others followed their study of *Nihonga* with that of *yōga;* Yūki Somei (1875–1957) was particularly adept at adapting Western idioms to *Nihonga* techniques. *Nihonga* painters in Kyoto welcomed and participated in the establishment of the Kansai Art Institute (Kansai Bijutsu-in) in 1906. The mutual influences were so varied, so extensive, and so informal that they cannot be neatly documented. *Yōga* must be credited, nonetheless, for expanding the parameters of artistic and cultural discourse and serving as a conduit for all manner of vital information and reproductions that would have been far more difficult for the *Nihonga* artists to acquire on their own.

Commerce and Culture at Home and Abroad

Domestic and international expositions provided the government with an effective means of developing and assessing the suitability of new products for domestic and foreign markets and for introducing new materials, processes, and products purchased abroad. While the primary emphases of these expositions were industrial

and commercial, cultural activities and art exhibitions had important political ramifications.

The third Domestic Industrial Exposition was held in Tokyo from April 1 to June 10, 1890, under the auspices of the Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce. By virtue of his position as director of the Tokyo Imperial Museum, Kuki Ryūichi was appointed vice-president of the exposition and chairman of the jury. This was a carry-over from the time when the museum and expositions were an integral part of the government's industrial development program. When the museum was transferred to the Ministry of the Imperial Household in 1886, it was divested of most of these industry-related activities, many of which were taken over by the Japan Art Association, leaving the museum free to concentrate upon the acquisition, preservation, and investigation of Japanese art of all periods.

Kuki was a judicious administrator, but his partiality as a judge was a source of apprehension. His plan to have only one set of judges for both *Nihonga* and *yōga* so outraged Asai Chū (1856–1907), the nominal leader of Western-style painters, that he withdrew. Since the Meiji Art Society was determined to avail itself of this opportunity to gain the official reinstatement of Western-style painting, it persuaded several painters to serve on the jury, which surprisingly included Tenshin. The painting that attracted the most attention was *Kannon Riding on a Dragon* by Harada Naojirō (1863–1899). Symptomatic of the concerted effort of *yōga* painters to make their art more acceptable by employing Japanese themes, this painting in oils was vehemently attacked by Toyama Masakazu (1848–1900), an important literary figure and professor of Tokyo Imperial University.

The *Nihonga* section was also the scene of a major skirmish. The victor and only artist to receive a first prize was Gahō. Second prizes were given to two other members of the Tokyo School of Fine Arts faculty, Gyokushō and Kose Shōseki, both originally from Kyoto, and to Nomura Bunkyo (1854–1911) who had come from Kyoto the previous year to teach at the Peers School (Gakushūin), as well as to Araki Kanpo, who was too important a Tokyo artist to overlook. Although the Kyoto painters were justly treated, Bairei was so dismayed by what transpired that he resigned from the jury and returned to Kyoto. He gathered the Kyoto artists and made a lengthy speech, the contents of which are now unknown, explaining the issues that had prompted his withdrawal.

Gahō's prize-winning painting, *White Clouds and Autumn Leaves* (Figure 3.6), continued the tentative efforts of Hōgai, under the tutelage of Fenollosa, to combine elements of Eastern and Western landscape painting. A critic writing in the May 30 issue of the *Hinode shinbun* (Sunrise Paper) wryly observed that he could detect therein elements of such artists as Kanō Tan'yū (1602–1674), Sesshū, Kanō Motonobu (1476–1559), Ogata Kōrin (1658–1716), Maruyama Ōkyo (1733–1795), and Kose no Kanaoka (fl. 9th century), as well as the schools of Tosa, Sumiyoshi, and Takuma, which is perhaps as much a commentary on the writer as the painter.[5] The critic for the *Asahi* newspaper compared Gahō and Gyokushō's paintings and thought they were so anxious to display new ideas that they had lost all sense of tradition. He claimed that Gyokushō's painting was too commonplace to be harmful, whereas Gahō was so desirous of being spiritual that his painting was simply strange; however, his ambition made him more dangerous and hence more challenging.

The partisanship displayed at the third Domestic Industrial Exposition prompted both the Meiji Art Society and the Japan Art Association to hold their own exhibitions that fall. The latter reasserted its continued support for those artists who had found favor with the court and official circles and it was from their ranks that Tazaki Sōun (1815–1898), Mori Kansai, Kanō Eitoku (1814–1891), and Morizumi Tsurana (1809–1892) were selected that fall to be the first Imperial Household Artists. The ability of Gahō, another appointee, to remain the sole outsider who continued to garner awards does not lend itself to ready explanation.

This exposition was a forerunner of the Japanese contribution to the World's Columbian Exposition held in Chicago in 1893. The Japanese chose to model their national pavilion on a historic prototype, as did other nations, and constructed a



Figure 3.6
Hashimoto Gahō, 1835–1908. *White Clouds and Autumn Leaves* (Hakuun kōju), 1890. Hanging scroll: color on paper; 265.8×159.3 cm. Art Museum, Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music.

free adaptation of the Byōdōin at Uji. Its tripartite interior lent itself to the eclectic evocation of Fujiwara (late Heian), Muromachi, and Edo architecture whose interiors were decorated by the staff and pupils of the Tokyo School of Fine Arts. Great importance was attached by the Japanese to the fact that the art exhibition was shown for the first time in the Palace of Fine Arts rather than in an industrial building, as was usual. These Japanese exhibits were portrayed by Kubota Beisen, who attended the exhibition as a correspondent for the *Kokumin shinbun* (People's Newspaper) (Plate 27). He had earlier attended the Paris Exposition of 1889, which he described in his publication *Beisen's Journey* (Beisen man'yū gafu). The first and only *Nihonga* artist to have preceded him was Watanabe Seitei, who had spent some time in Europe following the Paris Exposition of 1878; he was much admired for his skillful blending of Japanese and Western elements as can be seen in his painting, *Shinobazu Pond* (Plate 30).

The Japanese work of art that drew the greatest attention was a monumental tapestry by Kawashima Jinbei (1853–1910) depicting a festival procession at Nikkō, which was acquired by the Field Museum in Chicago.[6] The antagonism toward *yōga* artists persisted and only two oil paintings by Andō Nakatarō (1861–1912) were exhibited. The *Nihonga* paintings that attracted the greatest interest were Seitei's *Roosters on a Cart in the Snow*; Imao Keinen's *A Group of Carp* and *Monkey Running from an Eagle*; Kikuchi Hōbun's (1862–1918) *Herons by a Pine Tree Alongside the Water*; and Chikudō's *A Fight Between a Kite and a Crow* and *Tiger* (Plate 26), which drew the highest praise. Figure paintings by Uemura Shōen and Noguchi Shōhin (1847–1917) exhibited in the Woman's Building were much admired, but Kose Shōseki's *Prince Shōtoku* and Kanō Tomonobu's *Battle of the Heike* went unnoticed.[7] Frank Brinkley, when he previewed the exhibit in Tokyo, lamented that so gifted a painter as Gyokushō should have produced so patent an "exhibition painting" and he felt that Gahō had "likewise not done himself full justice." He observed that Gahō "has a plain tendency to assimilate European methods, and his work consequently challenges criticism from a stand-point unfamiliar to the Japanese, while the Occidental connoisseur is perplexed by it, feeling uncertain whether to judge it wholly by his own canons or to estimate it by ideals which the painter himself seems anxious to eschew."[8]

At a final reception given by the Japanese delegation, Yamataka Nobuakira invited the assembled guests to attend the fourth Domestic Industrial Exposition to be held in Kyoto in 1895. Kyoto had been chosen as the site for this exposition by the Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce as a means of prodding Kansai merchants and manufacturers to expand their domestic and export markets, for which they were given sizable subsidies. The textile industry outdid itself, producing marvels of technical virtuosity that the average visitors found far more impressive than the paintings. Nishimura Sōzaemon displayed a large brocade of Chikudō's rendering of the Daitokuji Kannon of Muqi (fl. late 13th century) woven in more than three hundred different colors to achieve an astonishingly life-like quality. Kawashima Jinbei adopted the Gobelin technique of weaving to produce a tapestry replica of Kanō Hōgai's 1888 *The Compassionate Kannon*, reproducing the original with remarkable fidelity. Iida Shinshichi exhibited a four-panel screen, *Waves* (Arai sori no nami), that seemed to defy the limits of embroidery. Indeed all the crafts seemed so intent upon straining the boundaries of their media that little thought was given to the originality of the designs or the appropriateness of reproducing such complex paintings.

The painting exhibition, too, was more impressive than at any of the previous expositions. At the entrance to the Japanese-style painting section there hung in solitary splendor the painting awarded the first prize, Gahō's *Sakyamuni and the Sixteen Rakans*, which was purchased for 1000 yen. The gallery to the left of the entrance was reserved for six pairs of screens produced by Taki Katei, Gyokushō, Noguchi Yūkoku, Noguchi Shōhin, and Matsumoto Fūko (1840–1923), all of which received awards, leaving only Gahō's *Dragon and Tiger* (Ryūko) unrecognized. It proved as controversial as Kuroda Seiki's *Morning Toilette*. The critic Amano Kō reported in the July 5 issue of the art magazine *Tōei* (Shadow of the Lamp) that

those who disliked the painting thought that the tiger seemed paralyzed with fear and the dragon looked as though it were about to sneeze, but that he himself had nothing but praise for an artist who had the courage to risk his reputation and forgo his established style to attempt so original a conception, even though he lacked the dynamism and technical brilliance to carry it off. One may ask to what extent is the remarkable esteem still accorded both Hōgai and Gahō more an acknowledgment of the dimension of what they attempted rather than a measure of what they achieved?

Flushed with her recent victory over China, Japan approached the Paris Exposition of 1900 with a new sense of national identity that sought recognition on a more equal footing. Foreign responses to previous exhibits were carefully considered, as were the views of those most familiar with France. The exposition delegation, through their selections and subsidies, guided the artists and entrepreneurs. With Tenshin and Kuki removed from the dominant positions they had held for more than a decade, *yōga* artists were finally given the opportunity to display their accomplishments to a discerning audience, only to find their efforts dismissed as unworthy of so artistically accomplished a nation as Japan. Although lumped together by the French under the common category of painting, the *Nihonga* artists fared no better. Even in Paris in 1900, the Gold Medal was awarded to Ōhashi Suiseki (1865–1945) for his specialty, a meticulously executed painting of a tiger. Yet here again, textile renderings of *Nihonga* paintings were lavishly praised and awarded prizes. Inured to the persistent exoticism and ethnocentricity of audiences and critics, the many *yōga* artists in attendance at least benefitted by the exposure to new influences, while *Nihonga* painters did not feel their efforts were adequately recognized.

The exposition was perhaps most beneficial to those Japanese who attended. In addition to the many *yōga* artists who accompanied Kuroda, it was a rare opportunity for Takeuchi Seihō, the third *Nihonga* artist to be sent abroad (after Seitei and Beisen). With partial funding from the art school and the city government, and a subscription fund provided by patrons, he went to visit art schools and museums in anticipation of the imminent reorganization of art education in Kyoto. He was accompanied by Nakazawa Iwata (1858–1943), a Kyoto Imperial University professor of chemistry who was sent to observe European industrial art schools prior to establishing and becoming director of Kyoto Higher Craft School (Kyoto Kōtō Kōgei Gakkō) in 1902 (Figure 3.7); and Kinkōzan Sōbei (1868–1927), a seventh-generation potter already well known in France, who was sent to observe new developments in pottery manufacture.

The group left in August 1900 and travelled via Hong Kong, Singapore, Colombo, and Suez before docking in Marseilles. Nakazawa planned the itinerary and acted as interpreter, as did Hayashi Tadamasa (1853–1906), the leading Japanese art dealer in Paris. They visited France, England, Belgium, Holland, Germany, Austria, Hungary, and Italy before returning to Japan the following February. In preparing for the trip, Seihō had a scholar of Western aesthetics, Tokunaga Kakusen, read and translate for his students passages from Ruskin's *Modern Painters*, and the discussion it generated lasted well into the night. He marvelled at the works of Corot and Turner, the Sistine Madonna, and the many other famous paintings he saw. He purchased Western pigments and assiduously collected a wide variety of reference materials that included reproductions of paintings, sculpture casts, prints, and art books not available in Japan. He also visited the zoo wherever possible to study lions and other animals. The influence of this trip was directly reflected in many outstanding paintings he produced (Plate 34), but also in what Seihō conveyed to his students through his classes, lectures, and numerous articles that raised cogent issues about the relationship of *Nihonga* to Western art.

By the time the fifth Domestic Industrial Exposition was held in Osaka in 1902, the entire enterprise had become routine and its usefulness supplanted by newer, more varied, and enterprising organizations. One has only to survey the exhibition of *Nihonga* sent to the Louisiana Purchase Exposition in St. Louis in 1904 to note that *Nihonga* was still plowing familiar fields without harvesting new strains. Gahō was

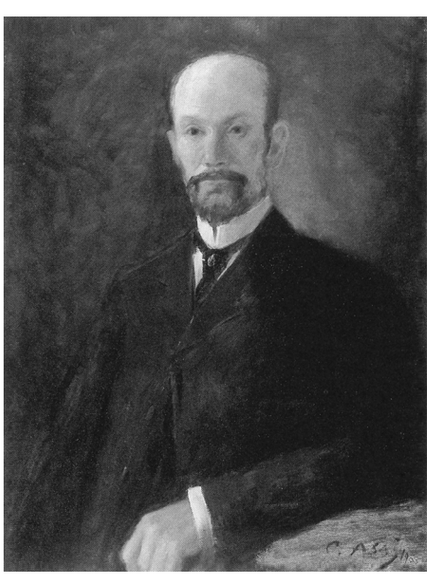


Figure 3.7
Asai Chū, 1856–1907. *Portrait of Dr. Nakazawa Iwata* (Nakazawa Iwata hakushi zō), 1903. Oil on canvas; 76.7×59 cm. Kyoto University of Crafts and Textile.

represented by two pairs of screens that depicted the four seasons and six landscape paintings that included *Trees in Twilight* (Plate 38). In these he appeared to have reverted to a more traditional rendering that allowed him greater scope for his skillful handling of color and wash. More than half the paintings were by little-known artists and the rest were conventional renderings of familiar themes.

The Painters' Cultural Milieu

Throughout the decade of the 1890s, officials as well as artists felt an impelling need to evolve a new mode of artistic expression that could best convey their heightened sense of national identity and also serve as a source of international prestige. The institutions, organizations, and exhibitions described above provide an objective means of charting the development of *Nihonga* during this period, but they do not allow us to gauge with any certainty its locus of authority, guiding principles, standards of competence, or criteria of excellence. We still have little understanding of how these institutions actually functioned and whose voices and views prevailed. For example, Araki Kanpo's brilliantly executed painting of a peacock (Plate 25) was commissioned by the Ministry of the Imperial Household, but who within the court actually determined what has come to be recognized as Imperial taste? We have some knowledge of the favorite painters and the artistic preferences of the Emperor Kōmei, but we cannot distinguish the views of the succeeding Meiji Emperor from those of the Ministry of the Imperial Household. It is clear that the Meiji art world was not insulated from changes in political policy, and that the scope of even such noted figures as Tenshin and Kuki were dependent upon the fortunes of their political mentors. As in so many other aspects of Meiji culture, there were no overriding ideological issues or radical stylistic innovations, and hence "reform in Japan was more groping and more pragmatic."[9] For that reason it is essential to chart the evolution of *Nihonga* in the context of both the institutions and the cultural milieu that shaped its development. The available biographical accounts of most artists still do not enable us to grasp their socio-economic background or how their families fared in early Meiji. The rapid changes in their physical world brought the persistence of traditional social proprieties and professional obligations into sharper focus. The dominant role of the Meiji government in the development of modern Japanese art may seem an extension of shogunate and court support in a different guise, but a money economy, growing meritocracy, and constant exposure to foreign knowledge and cultural chauvinism imposed both subtle and significant strains.



Figure 3.8
Kume Keiichirō, 1866–1934. *Evening Moon* (Yūzuki), 1894. Oil on canvas; 26.5×36.5 cm. Kume Museum of Art, Tokyo.

The endurance of literati values enabled Tomioka Tessai to remain an integral part of the Kyoto art world without submitting his work to their judgment. The persistent prejudice against commerce obscures such fruitful relationships as Chikudō and Seihō's with Kyoto's leading textile entrepreneurs and Watanabe Seitei's collaboration with producers of cloisonné, ceramics, and prints (Plates 45–47). The search for Western stylistic sources that influenced the development of *mōrō-tai*, or "hazy style," by Taikan (Plates 36 and 37), Shunsō (Plates 39 and 40), and members of the Japan Art Institute does not give due recognition to either the influence of their *yōga* colleagues at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts, particularly the impressionist landscapes of Kume Keiichirō (Figure 3.8), or to the rendering of atmospheric effects through unbounded ink washes by Shiokawa Bunrin (Plates 1 and 2), Chikudō (Plates 32 and 33), and the contemporary work of Seihō (Plates 34 and 43). The cultural continuity and social cohesion of Kyoto allowed its artists to shape their own stylistic evolution in a more coherent manner, whereas only when their ties to Tenshin and Gahō were loosened were Taikan and Shunsō free to explore the potentials of Rinpa and to find more distinctive modes of expression (Plates 50 and 51). Only then did Kawai Gyokudō evidently feel free to further adapt the handscroll format to portray the pleasures of a seaside inn (Plate 48). The versatility and technical proficiency of the *Nihonga* artists suggest that they would have been far more receptive to new ideas and formal innovation were they not burdened by an obligation to maintain their cultural uniqueness and their traditional media.

Notes

1. For a general history of this institution, see Yoshida Chizuko's essay, "The Tokyo School of Fine Arts," in the section "*Nihonga*: Issues and Institutions" in this catalogue.
2. Richard Muther, *The History of Modern Painting*, 3 vols. (New York: Macmillan and Co., 1896) and Russell Ash, *Alma Tadema* (London: Aylesbury, 1973).
3. Shunsō's painting measures 145.7×272.7 cm., and Kogetsu's scene of a pasturing horse measures 170.3×271.8 cm.
4. Although Tenshin and Fukuchi played lesser roles in the later stage of the compilation, the final result was published under Kuki's name. See Commission impériale à l'Exposition universelle de Paris 1900, *Histoire de l'Art du Japon* (Paris, 1900).
5. Kanzaki Ken'ichi, *Kyoto ni okeru Nihonga-shi* (The History of *Nihonga* in Kyoto), (Kyoto: Kyoto Seihan Insatsusha, 1929): 81, n. 4.
6. For the works exhibited by Japanese artists, see World's Columbian Exposition, *Revised Catalogue: Department of Fine Arts, with Index of Exhibitors* (Chicago: W.B. Conkey Company, 1893): 383–93.
7. William Walton, *Art and Architecture of the World's Columbian Exposition* (Philadelphia: G. Barrie, 1893): 92–93.
8. Frank Brinkley, *Artistic Japan at Chicago: A Description of Japanese Works of Art Sent to the World's Fair* (Yokohama: Japan Mail Office, 1893): 23.
9. Marius B. Jansen and Gilbert Rozman, eds., *Japan in Transition from Tokugawa to Meiji* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988): 10.

4.
"Bunten": A National Forum, 1907–1918

Ellen P. Conant

Japan emerged from the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–1905 as the leading nation in East Asia—politically, economically, and militarily. As the first Asian power to defeat a Western nation, the Japanese were filled with a new sense of confidence and a renewed appreciation of their cultural traditions. The Anglo-Japanese Naval Treaty of 1902 had left Japan free to enlarge her colonial control of Taiwan to include Korea, which it annexed in 1910. By joining the Allied cause in World War I, the country acquired the status of a world power and developed a robust economy that lasted well beyond the armistice of 1918. Japan had achieved a high level of institutional development and educational achievement. Manufacturing was rapidly replacing the early dependence on agriculture, crafts, tea, and raw silk as the mainstay of the economy. Apart from the capital and elite circles, the lifestyle of most of the population had not changed appreciably and the respect for traditional culture and artifacts had also remained constant. Now that the arts and crafts were not so vital to its national economy, Japan could give greater thought to cultural concerns and the nation's artistic development.

Prelude to "Bunten"

In the early 1900s, the Ministry of Education sought to regain some of the authority over art institutions that it had relinquished in early Meiji. Okakura Tenshin's (1862–1913) recommendation in 1897 that art institutions be strengthened may not have gone unheeded, for a short time later a former colleague and experienced art administrator, Masaki Naohiko (1862–1940), was permitted to establish within the Ministry of Education an art section that he then headed. Before recommending new policies, he toured Europe and the United States from 1899 to 1901, reviewing art education programs and institutions. The artists and officials he met at the Paris Exposition of 1900 and on his subsequent visit to the Japanese ambassador to Austria, Makino Nobuaki (1861–1949), all urged him to recommend that Japan establish a government-sponsored art exhibition similar to the French Salons. On his return, Masaki became head of the Tokyo School of Fine Arts, which he rapidly reorganized and expanded, thereby becoming extremely familiar with the problems that beset painting circles. Masaki also garnered support for a national exhibition from *yōga* artists such as Kuroda Seiki (1866–1924) and leading university figures. Thus, when Makino was appointed Education Minister in 1906, they had no difficulty in securing approval for the establishment of an annual government art exhibition from the Prime Minister, Saionji Kinmochi, who had since early Meiji taken a keen interest in French culture and the arts.

The Ministry of Education Art Exhibition (*Monbushō bijutsu tenrankai*), better known as "Bunten," was touted as the first official exhibition to deal with art independent of industry. It was organized into three parts: the first division for *Nihonga*; the second division for *yōga*; and the third division for sculpture. Although operating on the commendable premise that all art groups would be invited to exhibit under government auspices, the authorities were from the outset keenly aware of the difficulties involved in selecting juries that could be both representative and objective. The Ministry of Education therefore took the preliminary precaution on June 5, 1907 of insisting upon full control over the nomination and selection of jury members and the appointment of the chairmen, even before actually authorizing the Bunten. They established separate juries for each of the three divisions and forbade judges and discouraged artists from participating in more than one division, further accentuating the distinctions between different fields of art that had already undermined their potential development.

The governing regulations were fiercely contested and so frequently altered that

artists grew increasingly restive and rebellious because of the threat they posed to the larger opportunities implicit in the exhibition—a more prestigious exhibition venue and a rapidly expanding national audience, coupled with the assurance of a viable career for participating artists, and an enhanced status for those whose work was awarded prizes and purchased by the government or private benefactors. The awarding of first, second, and third prizes was expanded in 1909 to include a fourth category, the certificate of merit, but the system proved so onerous that after 1916 only a Special Award (*tokusen*) was granted, and the rule that only works that had won prizes could be purchased was likewise eliminated. A prohibition regarding the exhibition of any works injurious to public morality led to renewed debate regarding the role of the nude in Japanese art. Because so many of the works submitted were exceedingly large, the authorities passed a regulation in 1911 that permitted the exhibition of only part of some works.

It was the jury system that proved the most inimicable to resolution, stemming as it did from long-standing bureaucratic ties within the Ministry of Education. The former cohorts of Tenshin in the Ministry of Education who were members of the *Nihonga* jury of the first Bunten—particularly Hamao Arata, who had just been appointed president of Tokyo Imperial University; Takamine Hideo, principal of Tokyo Higher Teachers' School (Tokyo Kōtō Shihan Gakkō); and Imaizumi Yūsaku, his former associate at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts and then head of a section of the Tokyo Imperial Museum—took this opportunity to restore his official status after a hiatus of nine years by appointing him a member of their jury. Characteristically, Tenshin insisted that Yokoyama Taikan and Hishida Shunsō also be appointed, in addition to Hashimoto Gahō, Shimomura Kanzan, and Kawai Gyokudō. By assuring Tenshin a dominant voice in selecting paintings for the *Nihonga* division of the first Bunten, these officials knowingly polarized Tokyo *Nihonga* circles, contrary to their stated goal of assembling all groups large and small to participate jointly in a national art exhibition.

The various art organizations now coalesced into two opposing groups. One was the so-called Old Faction (*Kyūha*), the Authentic Fellowship Society (Seiha Dōshi-kai) composed largely of artists associated with the Japan Art Association (Nihon Bijutsu Kyōkai) and several smaller groups. Because they had been denied adequate representation on the jury, the Authentic Fellowship Society boycotted the first Bunten and held a separate exhibition that fall in association with the 41st exhibition of the Japan Art Association. The other was the so-called New Faction (*Shinpa*), the Society for the Refinement of National Painting (Kokuga Gyokusei-kai), led by Tenshin, who attracted to his fold many of the talented young artists banding together to form a host of new organizations where they could share common views, explore new ideas, and display their works.

This categorization obscures the many artists whose allegiances and works led them to overlapping involvement in disparate groups, and the many more who chose to follow a middle course. The current retention of this terminology continues to oversimplify the complex character of what actually occurred; and the disproportionate attention paid to the activities of the Japan Art Institute (Nihon Bijutsu-in) neglects the significant role the Bunten played in the development of Japanese art during the last years of Meiji and the first half of Taishō.

In addition to his own faction, Tenshin deftly exploited the mixed loyalties of those jurors still affiliated with the Tokyo School of Fine Arts such as Kawabata Gyokushō, Araki Kanpo, Terasaki Kōgyō (1866–1919), and Kobori Tomoto (1864–1931), and heightened the competition with Kyoto art circles represented by Takeuchi Seihō, Kikuchi Hōbun (1862–1918), Yamamoto Shunkyo, and Imao Keinen (1845–1924). He also exercised his skill at attracting the private pupils of major Tokyo artists, encouraging such talented young artists as Yasuda Yukihiko, Imamura Shikō, Maeda Seison, and Kobayashi Kokei to participate in the Bunten. These activities were bound to have concerned *yōga* circles as well, who recalled the divisive role that Tenshin had played in the foreclosure of the Technical Art School (Kōbu Bijutsu Gakkō) in 1883 and his subsequent efforts to deny official support to *yōga* artists.



Figure 4.1
Nishimura Goun, 1877–1938. *Roaring* (Hōkō), 1907. Hanging scroll: color on silk; 171.3×115.5 cm. Yamatane Museum of Art, Tokyo.



Figure 4.2
Hishida Shunsō, 1874–1911. *The Bodhisattva Kenshu* (Kenshu bosatsu), 1907. Hanging scroll: color on silk; 186×99 cm. The National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo.

The Early Bunten

The first Bunten opened on October 25, 1907, in the Tokyo Industrial Exposition Art Gallery in Ueno Park and attracted a wide audience from the crowds that frequented this new recreational area. The two most popular works were a pair of six-panel screens of an ink landscape, *After the Rain* (Amebare), by Takeuchi Seihō, and a pair of richly colored two-panel screens, *Autumn in the Woods* (Konoma no aki), by Shimomura Kanzan, that were strikingly different in concept and execution. The major Kyoto artist, Seihō immediately assumed a dominant role with his brilliant evocation of the famous pair of six-panel screens, *Willow Trees, Herons, and a Flock of Birds* (Yanagi sagi gunkin zu) by the Shijō artist Goshun (1752–1811), which surpassed its source for sheer mastery of evanescent ink wash, subtle tonality, and elegiac mood. Seihō's consummate mastery of the naturalist tradition based on *shasei* elicited the admiration of both critics and public alike. A long-time pupil of Hōgai and Gahō and the most technically accomplished artist of the Japan Art Institute, Kanzan presented a cropped close-up of tree trunks and shrubs, richly executed in Japanese and Western pigments, that combined a new realism resulting from his extended trip to Europe and the decorative effects of Rinpa in a work that appealed to an audience equally attracted to what was new and foreign.

If not for the firm control of the chief juror, Nakazawa Iwata (1858–1943), the *Nihonga* divisions might never have reached a consensus. No first prize and only three second prizes were awarded. A second prize was awarded to Konoshima Ōkoku (1877–1938) of Kyoto for *Wintry Shower* (Shigure), and a third prize to Nishimura Goun, also of Kyoto, for *Roaring* (Figure 4.1). That two animal paintings were so honored confirms the abiding popularity of this subject. Another second prize awarded to a graduate of the Tokyo School of Fine Arts, Noda Kyūho (1879–1971), for *Street Preaching* (Tsuji seppō) is evidence of Tenshin's continuing espousal of this type of oversized narrative painting on historical themes. Taikan's insistence upon awarding one of the second prizes to Hishida Shunsō for *The Bodhisattva Kenshu* (Kenshu bosatsu), independent of the quality of the painting, struck a distinctly partisan note (Figure 4.2).

It is important to recall that Tenshin, Taikan, and Shunsō had been abroad for several years prior to the establishment of the Bunten and that neither Taikan nor Shunsō had participated in exhibitions judged by anyone other than their own teachers. The Bunten offered the first occasion for them to exhibit their new work. Their recently embraced *mōrō-tai*, or "hazy style," was admirably suited to small landscapes and genre scenes but did not lend itself to large works or further stylistic development. Furthermore, these paintings had not been well received and the artists had retreated to the remote village of Izura from want of funds at a time when most of the leading painters had far more commissions than they could honor. They nonetheless persevered and by exploring the stylistic potential of Rinpa and *nanga* were able to submit impressive works to subsequent Bunten.

The second Bunten reversed the situation without resolving any of the underlying issues. A newly-appointed Education Minister who was lobbied by a number of influential supporters of the Authentic Fellowship Society assured Society members of representation on the second jury where they in turn cooperated well with Kyoto artists. It was now Tenshin's turn to abstain and to hold a separate exhibition, which included many excellent paintings, in conjunction with his Japan Art Institute. It was at the second Bunten that the Kyoto artists secured a significant role that they thereafter safeguarded by dint of their political prowess and the superior quality of their entries. Seihō submitted a pair of two-panel screens, *Monkeys and Rabbits in a Pen* (Kawaretaru saru to usagi), that displayed his technical mastery and the graphic rendering of these animals, a specialty of Maruyama school. The major Kyoto artists were particularly well represented and a large number of their pupils won prizes. Their refined naturalism based on the traditions of Maruyama-Shijō painting gained them national recognition which they thereafter exploited to great advantage.

The exhibition also conferred new importance on those regarded as more artistically moderate figures, such as Kawai Gyokudō, Terasaki Kōgyō, Yamamoto

Shunkyo, and Uemura Shōen, all of whom effectively drew on traditional sources to produce some of the most popular works annually submitted to the Bunten. Many of the *nanga* artists affiliated with the conservative faction also continued to enjoy appreciative support.

Determined to show that he was not less adept at figure painting, Seihō presented at the third Bunten *Sudden Shower* (Plate 76), which was all the more arresting for its striking rendition of the popular theme of *bijin-ga*. His portrayal of a *maiko* in arrested motion, face concealed by a fan, her bright blue kimono painted with a bravura sweep of a broad brush loaded with azurite blue, capped by the startling conceit of an ink landscape pattern on the *obi*, astonished an audience surfeited with endless variations on this theme. Taikan by contrast offered the allure of the foreign and exotic in his painting *Floating Lamps* (Figure 4.3), a scene of three women at the banks of the Ganges about to float dishes of lighted oil to cast their fortunes (a sight he had observed during his visit to India in 1903). The light palette and lingering elements of *mōrō-tai* are combined with a figure style reminiscent of the Calcutta painters in the circle of Rabindranath Tagore (1861–1941), whom Taikan visited. The competition was to continue unabated as both artists produced a stream of brilliant works that ran parallel but different courses.

Since no major organization was willing to forgo the opportunities afforded by the Bunten, the contending factions vied for power and prestige during the next three exhibitions. Tenshin and the members of the Japan Art Institute submitted some fine works, the most impressive no doubt being the pair of six-panel screens *Fallen Leaves* (Ochiba) that Hishida Shunsō exhibited at the third Bunten in 1909 (see Plate 50). Two years later, Taikan displayed the finest of his early works, *Mountain Path* (Yamaji), in which he combined with rare felicity elements of Rinpa and *nanga* to portray a characteristic literati theme of a traveller leading his horse through dense autumn foliage. This work won such immediate recognition that the artist painted several versions (Plate 51).

From the fifth Bunten in 1911, the *Nihonga* and *yōga* divisions were also shown in Kyoto. For the sixth Bunten, officials divided *Nihonga* into two sections representing the Old and New Factions and appointed separate juries and awards; this only served to intensify the inherent problems and was therefore promptly discontinued. The "progressive" faction seized on this change to award second prizes to four gifted young artists for works that marked what were to be the new currents in Taishō painting—Imamura Shikō's strikingly original rendition of the traditional theme of *Eight Views of Ōmi* (Plate 128); Yasuda Yukihiko's *Dream Hall* (Yumedono), a representation of Prince Shōtoku and his attendants that anticipates his mature "neo-classicism" (*shin-koten-shugi*); Kobayashi Kokei's tautly delineated, decorative figure painting, *A Well of Paradise* (Gokuraku no i); and Tsuchida Bakusen's *Women of the Island* (Shima no onna), which reflected his intense interest in French painting, particularly the work of Gauguin. It is hard to imagine under what other auspices such innovative artists could have reached so wide an audience at so early an age and felt so confident that their prizes would assure them a viable career.

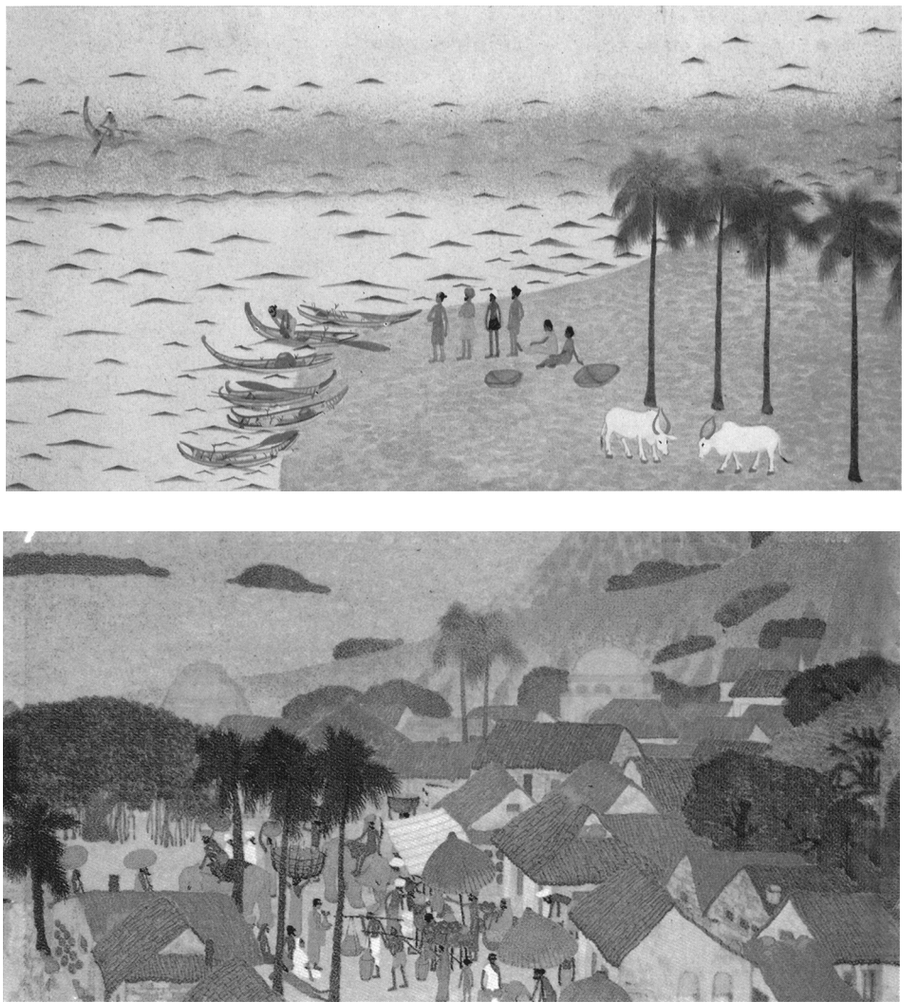
With the death of Gahō in 1908, Shunsō in 1911, and Tenshin in 1913, Taikan could no longer wield comparable authority, but there was general astonishment nonetheless when he was expelled from the jury of the eighth Bunten in 1914. Later that year, on the anniversary of Tenshin's death, he and Kanzan founded the Reorganized Japan Art Institute (Saikō Nihon Bijutsu-in) which thereafter became the leading art organization in Tokyo to compete with the Bunten. Many of the most promising painters who had exhibited in the Bunten thereafter also participated in the Institute exhibitions, commonly known as "Inten."

Maeda Seison showed *Handscroll of Korea* (Plate 145) at the second Inten in 1915; his *Eight Celebrated Sights of Kyoto: Ponto-chō, Kiyomizudera Temple* (Plate 130), one of the most arresting paintings of the period, was exhibited at the third Inten the following year. His close companion Kobayashi Kokei painted a similar theme from Japanese literature, *Shipwreck* (Plate 52), which was shown at the fourth Inten. One of the few Kyoto artists to remain closely affiliated with Inten was Tomita Keisen, whose *Handscroll of the Uji River: Kowata* (Plate 67), exhibited at the second Inten,



Figure 4.3
Yokoyama Taikan, 1868–1958. *Floating Lamps* (Ryūtō), 1909. Hanging scroll: color on silk; 143×51.1 cm. The Museum of Modern Art, Ibaraki.

Figure 4.4
Imamura Shikō, 1880–1916. *Handscrolls of the Tropical Country* (Nekkoku no maki), 1914. Two scrolls: color on paper. *Scroll of the Morning* (Asa no maki): 45.7× 954.5 cm.; *Scroll of the Evening* (Kure no maki): 45.7× 966 cm. Tokyo National Museum.



adroitly blended elements of *nanga* and Shijō school.

By far the most creative of the other young artists who now gravitated to the Institute was Imamura Shikō, whose *Eight Views of Ōmi* had so impressed his fellow artists at the sixth Bunten. That same year, he painted a work as boldly decorative on a more intimate scale, *Tiger and Dragon* (Plate 59). Although already in failing health in 1914, he followed the example of Taikan and Shunsō and made a brief trip to India, which inspired his most noted work, *Handscrolls of the Tropical Country* (Nekkoku no maki) (Figure 4.4). He succeeded in combining the formal elements of Rinpa with the rich tropical colors and folk art traditions of India to create an ingeniously original pair of narrative handscrolls that are regarded as one of the masterpieces of modern *Nihonga*. One of the few other works derived from this Indian trip was a pair of hanging scrolls, *Women Drawing Water, Men Herding Ox* (Plate 146), that captures the distinctly Indian character of the theme. Later that same year, Shikō accompanied three other members of the Institute—Taikan, Kanzan, and Kosugi Hōan—in traversing the famed Tōkaidō route depicted in the *ukiyo-e* prints of Hiroshige (1797–1858). They jointly painted a set of handscrolls that reveals the ability of these artists to recast such familiar themes in the novel formal idiom of *Nihonga* (Plate 126). These scrolls were exhibited at the newly-formed art division of the Takashimaya department store.

Shikō's death in 1916 at the age of 36 again deprived *Nihonga* of one of its most creative talents. His close associate, Yasuda Yukihiko, used a photograph as a model for his *Portrait of Imamura Shikō* (Plate 87) that was displayed at the memorial exhibition organized by his friends. It shows that even this quintessential neo-classical artist was familiar with contemporary European painting and able to work in the medium of watercolor to create so lively an image. It is only by seeking out a

wide range of works that these artists produced outside the major annual exhibitions that one can grasp the full spectrum of interests and skills of these *Nihonga* painters. This is important because the catalogues, postcards, books, and articles generated by the Bunten invariably reproduced works by these artists in their most characteristic official modes.

During the subsequent years of the Bunten, many very fine paintings were exhibited that reveal the continued capacity of these artists to elicit remarkably fresh and compelling works from traditional sources. One of the most popular themes at Bunten exhibitions was *bijin-ga*, paintings of beautiful women, that ran the gamut from mere modish fashion plates to some of the most brilliant figure painting of modern times. Many leading artists, particularly women painters, made a specialty of this theme which served as a metaphor for a wide range of topics. Kaburaki Kiyokata, who exhibited *The Day of Ordeal* (Tamesaruru hi) at the second Bunten (Figure 4.5), painted some of the most evocative examples of that theme. The most famous woman painter in Kyoto, Uemura Shōen, made this theme her specialty; an example is *Preparing to Dance* (Plate 79), exhibited at the eighth Bunten in 1914, when so many remarkable works were shown. Her skillful depiction of these beautifully groomed young women is in striking contrast to the seductive charms of *Feeling Warm* (Plate 78), exhibited the following year by Kitano Tsunetomi, who employed a very different technique. Seihō highly esteemed his young pupil, Tsuchida Bakusen, whose graduation picture *Hair* (Plate 77) so perfectly captured the sensuality implicit in this intimate scene that he arranged for it to be shown that same fall at the fifth Bunten.

It is interesting to compare these works by artists skilled in *bijin-ga* with a rare example by Shimomura Kanzan, *Spring Rain* (Plate 80), shown at the third Inten in 1916. Kanzan's vaunted technical skills are displayed to great advantage in the large-scale format of a pair of six-panel screens that show three women crossing a bridge, enveloped in the shimmering misty light of a sun shower, conveyed by means of gold-backed silk (*urahaku*). It was in the treatment of such uncommon themes that the artists often showed themselves to great advantage.

Landscapes and animals likewise continued to be popular themes in the Bunten. The depiction of such unfamiliar animals as turkeys, executed in a new variant of the puddled ink technique, scattered across the extent of a pair of six-panel screens (Plate 95), sufficed to launch the career of Hirafuku Hyakusui, who went on to became one of the major figures of the succeeding period. Two of the major painters perennially admired for their ability to present familiar landscape themes in a new light were the Kyoto painter Yamamoto Shunkyo and his Tokyo counterpart, Kawai Gyokudō. Shunkyo's set of handscrolls, *Four Seasons* (Plate 113), shown at the seventh Bunten, exhibited the brighter palette and freer tonal rendering of early Taishō painting. The pair of screens, *Waning Spring* (Plate 114), that Gyokudō exhibited in 1916 has come to be regarded as one of the masterpieces of the Bunten. Its brilliant color, compressed space, and unfamiliar setting all contributed to the effectiveness of this remarkable work by a much admired artist.

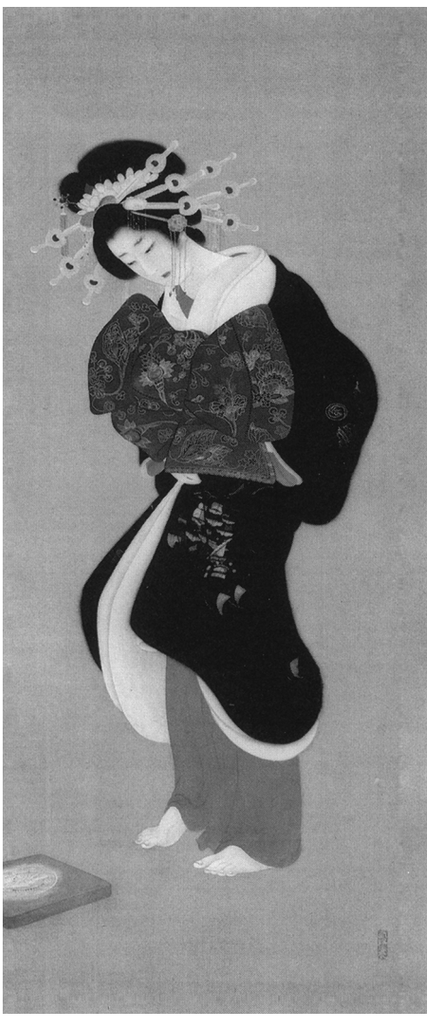


Figure 4.5
Kaburaki Kiyokata, 1878–1972. *The Day of Ordeal* (Tamesaruru hi), 1918. Hanging scroll: color on silk; 186.8×78 cm. Private collection.

New Currents in *Nihonga*

By seeking to gather all the many factions of *Nihonga* under the aegis of the Ministry of Education, the Bunten exacerbated the rivalry of the Japan Art Association, the Japan Art Institute, the Tokyo School of Fine Arts, and all the lesser groups affiliated with them. As Tenshin's influence waned, the more moderate Tokyo figures tried to enhance their standing by seeking to work with Kyoto artists, who did not neatly fit into the feuding cliques. This increased the influence of Kyoto artists who, conscious of the growing dominance of the Tokyo art circles and their close affiliation with government officials, felt all the more impelled to display their talents, thus heightening the competition between these two major artistic centers. They also posed a stylistic challenge to those artists who belonged to the self-styled New Faction.

Seihō established his eminence during the Bunten period with a series of ink paintings in an elegiac mood; his pair of screens, *Desolation* (Plate 49), executed in

1904, is interesting to compare with Shunsō's more decorative but less evocative rendering of the same theme one year later. In 1911, at the fifth Bunten, Seihō exhibited *Rain* (Plate 112), which depicts a mist-shrouded rural scene so subtly keyed that the mundane theme assumes lyric dimensions. This is in striking contrast to the Rinpa style he then adopted for the pair of cedar doors, *Moor Hens Among the Iris* (Plate 94), that he painted for the Aoyama Detached Palace in 1914 and his further exploration of this style in a pair of screens commissioned that year in commemoration of the Taishō Emperor's coronation. This led to a marked brightening of his palette and new efforts to combine *Nihonga* and *yōga* elements in a manner that was akin to, yet distinctive from, that of Yūki Somei (1875–1957). Seihō also continued to produce a stream of animal paintings that many artists emulated without quite rivalling.

Seihō was exceedingly busy during this period as a teacher at the Kyoto-City School of Arts and Crafts (Kyoto-shi Bijutsu Kōgei Gakkō) and participated in the curriculum revisions that led to the establishment in 1908 of the Kyoto Municipal Special School of Painting (Kyoto Shiritsu Kaiga Senmon Gakkō). This in no way lessened the importance of his private *juku*, Chikujō-kai, which held monthly meetings at which students' works were displayed and discussed. It was often here that the ideas and themes for Bunten entries were developed. In the months preceding the opening of the Bunten, students would bring their preliminary sketches and later their paintings for comment, correction, and the occasional final flourish. This process may have made them more susceptible to current trends, but it also forced them to test the limits of their potential. Extant letters to and from Gyokudō and Kōgyō reveal how involved these artists were in the intricacies of Bunten policies and politics and how circumspect they had to be in their dealings with officials in both Kyoto and Tokyo. All these obligations made enormous demands on Seihō's time and energy, yet by the end of this period he succeeded in producing in 1918 one of the single most accomplished landscapes of modern *Nihonga*, *Mouth of the River* (Kakō), which, as Michiyo Morioka has observed, "distills his earlier study of various styles into a unique individual expression."[1]

Seihō allowed his pupils considerable latitude and encouraged their more extensive interest in the Western art which had not been available to him at a comparable age. His students could draw on the resources of the Kyoto Imperial Museum and Kyoto Imperial University with its many scholars in literature, philosophy, and foreign languages. Despite Seihō's efforts, he could not meet his students' expectations of admission to the Bunten; there were too many jurors representative of different traditions, each of whom was equally obliged to care for his own students and associates.

Taikan, on the other hand, had neither a taste nor the temperament for teaching. He nonetheless played a comparable leading role by sheer dint of personality. His ability to impose his ideas and his ideals on the Reorganized Japan Art Institute was a remarkable achievement. If he did not train the next generation of painters, as did Seihō, he must be credited with having recognized and fostered the talents of many of the most creative painters of Taishō and early Shōwa. In the years following his departure from the Bunten, he produced a large number of gold screens sparsely decorated with large figures or landscape motifs that were more arresting than accomplished. A comparison of Taikan's set of paintings of the *Eight Views of Ōmi* (Ōmi hakkei) with Imamura Shikō's work on the same theme, both exhibited at the sixth Bunten, reveals how far he was from matching the achievements of his young colleague. Many of his screens betray a lack of compositional finesse and a spatial ambiguity; in contrast, he masterfully exploited the format of the handscroll, which he often painted in subtle ink washes, drawing on his thorough study of Chinese prototypes, as can be seen in his *Handscroll of Nio-no-ura* (Plate 115).

Taikan was heir to the nationalist currents that underlay Tenshin's concept of the East (*tōyō*), the subject of a recent study by Stefan Tanaka.[2] Taikan's crudity in rendering birds, beasts, and figures was regarded as a virtue born of the samurai values and traditions espoused by Tokyo's bureaucratic and cultured elite, as compared to the quality of *iki*, an elegance associated with the stylish sensibility of

the Edo gay quarters, that is thought to pervade the work of Seihō. The residue of these invidious comparisons still hampers an objective evaluation of the two leading figures of *Nihonga* on purely formal grounds.

"Bunten" and Changing Patronage Patterns

The prizes awarded by the Bunten were so important because they conferred a monetary value on the artists' work that directly affected their careers.[3] Although the Bunten program was meant to foster art independent from industry, it followed the pattern of earlier industrial expositions where the works exhibited were offered for sale. The government thought that by encouraging purchases they would be promoting the arts and thus improving the livelihood of the artists. Five *Nihonga* paintings were purchased by the government at the first Bunten and these acquisitions gradually increased, as did the number of private sales. The value of the work of artists who served on the jury greatly increased and this appreciation of values was keenly followed by the public. Attendance also grew rapidly so that by the tenth Bunten close to a quarter million people attended the exhibition. As the general public became purchasers, established relationships between artist and patron broke down and a variety of dealers interposed themselves. Traditional antique dealers began to handle modern painting and some of the mounters who were intimately associated with the artists began to serve as dealers.

From about the 1890s, shops dealing in modern painting began to appear and gradually the department stores opened art sections. Takashimaya inaugurated an art section in their Osaka store in 1911 and another in their Tokyo branch in 1916; in addition to sponsoring exhibitions, they soon began to act as regular dealers. By the last of the Bunten, artists' incomes had risen appreciably and so had their status in society. That the Bunten was institutionally faction-ridden and structurally divisive should not obscure its significant accomplishments. It conferred a new importance and status upon artists, both officially and publicly, by providing them a major exhibition venue that attracted widespread publicity. This resulted in a larger and more attentive audience that stimulated the artists to seek new themes and modes of representation. Despite the prevailing academicism inherent in such official efforts, the Bunten spurred artists to produce some remarkable works that set new standards and encouraged new avenues of exploration. By compelling artists to be more competitive and resourceful it contributed directly to the remarkable development of *Nihonga* during the late Meiji and early Taishō periods.

Notes

1. See Michiyo Morioka's biography of Takeuchi Seihō in this catalogue.
2. Stefan Tanaka, "Imaging History: Inscribing the Belief in the Nation," *Journal of Asian Studies* 53, no.1 (February 1994): 12–21.
3. See Kojima Kaoru, "Jobun/Introduction" in *Bunten no meisaku/Masterpieces from the Bunten Exhibition, 1907–1918*, exh. cat. (Tokyo: The National Museum of Modern Art, 1990): 5–10 [Japanese], 11–15 [English].

5.
"Teiten" and After, 1919–1935

J. Thomas Rimer

The period of sixteen years that followed the establishment of the annual exhibition Teiten in 1919 was one rich in new and often successful experiments. In many ways, the *Nihonga* created from this point in the Taishō period to the beginnings of the war period in the mid-1930s shows a special confidence and richness unparalleled during any other time in its history.

The Establishment of "Teiten"

Artists, patrons, and the public in general looked to national institutions to lift the creative standards of modern Japanese art, and the reconfiguration of the Bunten (The Ministry of Education Art Exhibition; *Monbushō bijutsu tenrankai*) seemed to offer great hope. Yet in hindsight it would appear that, despite enthusiastic efforts to renovate the national exhibition program and to rename the yearly exhibition the Exhibition of the Imperial Academy of Fine Arts (*Teikoku Bijutsu-in tenrankai*), or "Teiten," the renovated system came to reveal the same limitations as before. The most creative and experimental work of this period was generally produced by artists often indifferent, even hostile, to the government system.

This is not to deny that the earlier system of Bunten, which began in 1907, had not done much to improve the situation of artists. By awarding prizes and providing wide exposure of the work of contemporary artists, the Bunten helped solidify the position of younger painters who lacked the support and patronage their teachers could have supplied had they been trained in private *juku*. Instead they were trained in the art schools of Tokyo and Kyoto. Ironically, the very fact that contemporary artists were now seeking appropriate roles to play in a changing society raised the stakes, and the significance of the Bunten exhibitions was such that a demand for change, particularly from younger artists, seemed inevitable.

The complaints were generally of two kinds. The first involved seemingly inevitable issues of favoritism among the judges who, it was charged by some, tended to support their own colleagues and students. The second, related to the first, concerned factional and generational issues. Too many of the judges were older, and their loyalties remained with styles and ideals of painting that, even within the contours of *Nihonga*, seemed to stand for what was retrograde and mediocre.[1] Such figures, the younger generation seemed to believe, offered no usable artistic models and provided no true leadership.

In 1918, under the aegis of Education Minister Nakahashi Tokugorō (1861–1934), a group was set up to reorganize the existing system. Ministry of Education officials put in charge of this crucial advisory board one of the great intellectuals and writers of the period, Mori Ōgai (1862–1922) who, since his years in Germany from l884–1888, had maintained a considerable interest in the visual arts, and in particular with the development of *yōga*. In his earlier years, Ōgai had been a participant in the debates over the aspirations for the role of art and artists in his generation. Ōgai was still widely respected, but he was now an old man, ill and virtually at the end of his career. It could not be expected, therefore, that any outpouring of new ideas would occur from such a source.

Many of the older *Nihonga* artists who had previously advised the government on the original organization of the Bunten system were now dead. Those who continued on with the Teiten reorganization were all older, established artists, often quite conservative in nature. Yamamoto Shunkyo and Kawai Gyokudō were in their late forties, Kobori Tomoto (1864–1931) and Takeuchi Seihō were in their mid-fifties, and Imao Keinen (1845–1924), already active before the beginning of the Meiji period, was in his seventies.

More serious was the continued abstention from this structure by two powerful

and popular painters, Yokoyama Taikan and Shimomura Kanzan, whose allegiance to the Reorganized Japan Art Institute (Saikō Nihon Bijutsu-in) remained firm. They declined all overtures to join the new group and, with their refusal, the idea of an all-encompassing structure died a rapid death. True, Tomioka Tessai had been newly recruited and had agreed to participate. Now considered the last of the great *nanga* painters, Tessai was a brilliant artist and a highly respected, if somewhat erratic, figure. But, in his eighties, he was even older than Imao Keinen, and too independent a spirit to force a change in the group's conservative proclivities.

In the crucial matter of selecting judges for the Teiten exhibitions, however, some younger painters of prominence were chosen. This development helped to some extent to expand the scope of artistic vision. Among those selected were Kikuchi Keigetsu, Kaburaki Kiyokata, and Hashimoto Kansetsu. All were in their forties at the time. If not among the most progressive and innovative artists of their generation, they were nevertheless accomplished and widely respected.

There were useful results, then, in this reorganization of the yearly system of national exhibitions. Some younger painters began to win awards, and the public continued to follow the activities of the Teiten competitions with enthusiasm. Nevertheless, it seems clear that during this time, the public tended to prefer the work of artists shown by private groups. The prior Bunten polarities prevailed: the government exhibitions continued to represent the official mainstream, while the more restless and, by later common consensus, more accomplished artists continued alone or in small groups formed for mutual support.

In this artistic and social context, the *Nihonga* artists of this period, far more than their contemporaries in *yōga*, found it necessary to work under the strain of a multiple yoke which involved the balance of three functions. These might be described as political (in terms of government exhibitions); cultural, to the general public (who saw their work exhibited); and the personal, an artistry limited, as always, by the restraints placed on them by the desires and interests of their patrons. Creativity, even in the later years of the ebullient Taishō period, had to be defined within these shifting limits. Some artists emphasized one function over the others, but none could escape all three completely. As a result, an examination of the work of even the finest younger artists of this period—Kawabata Ryūshi, Maeda Seison, or Tsuchida Bakusen—can show a bewildering difference in the styles and strategies chosen to create a work suitable for one or the other of these three sometimes disparate categories.

Seison's large historical canvases, for example, seem to inhabit an artistic world different from his intimate sketches and ink drawings. In an essay looking back on his career, written late in his life, Seison wrote:

> I love the writing brush, not merely because I am a *Nihonga* artist, but because I am fascinated by the kinds of lines that a brush can make. You cannot force the brush; it must respond naturally, so that the appropriate "touch" will emerge in and of itself. If anything is forced, the cadence will be destroyed and something false will enter in.[2]

It is surely true that this aesthetic informs much of his best work, yet these observations seem to have little to do with the kind of heavy and portentous technique visible in his well-known 1929 painting of the medieval warrior Yoritomo, created in a large two-panel screen format (Figure 5.1). This painting was chosen as an "official" work to be sent abroad to Rome in 1930.

The activities of the government exhibitions in particular were closely linked with the art academies. Many of the judges and others associated with these yearly exhibitions were also active as teachers. In Kyoto, both Takeuchi Seihō and Yamamoto Shunkyo held teaching posts until the end of their careers. Two other Teiten-related artists who taught at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts (Tokyo Bijutsu Gakkō) were Kawai Gyokudō and Matsuoka Eikyū (1881–1938).

Although only represented in this exhibition by a scroll painted by a group of painters, *Scenes from Modern Life* (Plate 135), Eikyū was a figure of some interest in his period. His famous painting of 1925, *The Pond at Ikaho* (Figure 5.2), is often



Figure 5.1
Maeda Seison, 1885–1977. *Yoritomo in the Cave* (Dōkutsu no Yoritomo), 1929. Two-panel screen: color on silk; 190.9×278.7 cm. The Ōkura Shūkokan Museum, Tokyo.



Figure 5.2
Matsuoka Eikyū, 1881–1938. *The Pond at Ikaho* (Ikaho no numa), 1925. Hanging scroll: color on silk; 201.8×131.5 cm. Art Museum, Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music.

considered his most representative work. Eikyū was one of a group of brilliant brothers, chief among them Yanagida Kunio (1875–1962), arguably the greatest modern Japanese anthropologist, and a towering intellectual figure in this century. The other two, Inoue Michiyasu (1866–1941), a student of ancient Japanese texts, and Matsuoka Shizuo (1878–1936), a linguist, also made formidable contributions to modern Japanese intellectual life. Eikyū's work was sometimes stimulated by his brothers' enthusiasms, and he was often considered the most "intellectual" among his generation of *Nihonga* painters.

Eikyū's art, which owed a certain allegiance to the *Yamato-e* tradition, is now no longer considered to be of the first rank, but his work as a teacher helped train many artists who became prominent in the postwar years. Yet like Eikyū, these men represent a conservative and academic strain that was nurtured by their teacher and informed by the spirit of the Teiten ideals. By the time of the first of the Teiten exhibitions in 1919, the mechanisms, opportunities, and corresponding restraints that would drive (and also contain) the energies of a new generation of painters were in place. And the old polarities continued.

The Mechanisms of the World of Art

Public interest in contemporary art (whether *Nihonga* or *yōga*) continued to thrive since the first Bunten in 1907. By the end of the Taishō period in 1926, it had grown still more. An article written in the *Tokyo Asahi* newspaper noted that over seventy modern art exhibitions had been held in Tokyo during that year, ranging from the government-sponsored exhibition to private exhibitions and displays in galleries and department stores. Exposure in these private milieus allowed for a more personal, and often more adventuresome, selection of works by artists. From today's vantage point, these exhibitions sometimes displayed works of more lasting merit than might be found in the larger official salon exhibitions. Such exposure was particularly useful to younger artists whose work, still modestly priced, might attract potential patrons.

Public exhibitions during this period often performed a second function for the thousands who saw them, for they made available the art of the past, heretofore often inaccessible to the general public. Before the founding of museums in Tokyo, Nara, and Kyoto in 1872, 1895, and 1897, people with an interest in the visual arts, with the exception of wealthy connoisseurs, had few occasions to train their eyes in the styles and aesthetics of classical Japanese and Chinese art. With the exception of the sculpture and paintings that could be occasionally seen in Buddhist temples, much of the nation's artistic heritage was in private hands and rarely shown. It was only in the first decades of this century that the Japanese national museums began to assemble representative collections and make them available to the general public. By the Taishō period both museums and department stores, seeking to play a larger cultural role, began mounting exhibitions that ranged from collections of the classic masterpieces of China and Japan to the contemporary art of Japan, Asia, and Europe. It suddenly seemed as if the whole artistic heritage of mankind was on rotating display in an exciting, even bewildering mélange of styles, periods, and cultures.

If the public was overwhelmed with this sudden revelation of richness, the same was true for Japanese artists of the period. Many of them now saw the classic masterpieces of their own culture for the first time. True, the older generation of painters who had served as teachers for this younger generation often possessed small personal collections of classical Japanese, and occasionally Chinese, paintings which they would take out for their students to copy. Few, however, owned the representative pieces of high quality that were beginning to be seen in permanent museum collections and in temporary exhibitions. Taishō exhibitions not only helped develop the public's collective eye but gave *Nihonga* artists a new impetus to experiment with the styles of the past. Classical art, in this atmosphere, often helped stimulate the latest artistic fashions.

From the 1907 Bunten exhibition onwards, the distinctions between *Nihonga* and *yōga* were explicitly maintained, with entries in the two categories shown in differ-

ent spaces. Newspapers inevitably began to assign two critics, one for *Nihonga*, one for *yōga*, to cover the important national exhibitions, reinforcing the distinctions in the public's consciousness. At the end of the Meiji period, it was still possible for the distinguished novelist Natsume Sōseki (1867–1916) to write a lengthy article discussing all the entries in the 1912 Bunten. Just a few years later, there were few, if any, of the ever more "specialized" critics who would care, even dare, to try.

This strict distinction can perhaps be nowhere better observed than in the Meiji Memorial Picture Gallery, completed in 1926, which contains eighty mural-size paintings commemorating events during the life of the Meiji Emperor. There is a clear division in their display: forty of the paintings are *Nihonga*, forty *yōga*. Given the myth-making urges behind the project, it might be argued that, in visual terms at least, the *Nihonga* painters were quite adept at sustaining the myth of Meiji. Despite the dangers inherent in making such large-scale works, Maeda Seison's *The Great Imperial Thanksgiving Rite* (Figure 5.3), with its bold design and elegant simplicity, or the perspective and coloring used in Dōmoto Inshō's *His Majesty at Lessons* (Figure 5.4), appear equally striking, both in composition and execution, to works by two of the leading *yōga* painters of the time, *The Battle of the Japan Sea* by Nakamura Fusetsu (1866–1943) (Figure 5.5) or *The Emperor at Tokyo Imperial University* by Fujishima Takeji (1867–1943) (Figure 5.6). In this instance, the techniques of *Nihonga* were able to meet a demand to educate the public to the power and prestige of the state, the nation, and its history.

The growing depth and sophistication of the public audience for art during this period seems clear, but documenting the phenomenon is difficult, since careful studies of the journalism of the time have yet to be made, even in Japan. The sheer amount of material available suggests that such a study would prove a daunting task. The 1926 *Asahi* newspaper survey reported that fifty art magazines, covering every conceivable field, were functioning and in print that year (Figure 5.7). Journalism surely provided the chief means to inform public taste. Yet how much did the critics themselves know?

When art journalism, along with the publication of specialized art magazines, began around the turn of the century, the proper qualifications needed for a critic to address and educate the general public were debated heatedly. Some insisted that the informed critic should be a scholar. Others felt that the ideal critic should be an artist himself, who could truly grasp the significance of the creative process. Still another view proposed that the most useful critics should possess a broad cultural and social view of Japan and her evolving place in the world which could allow works of art to be considered in a meaningful context.

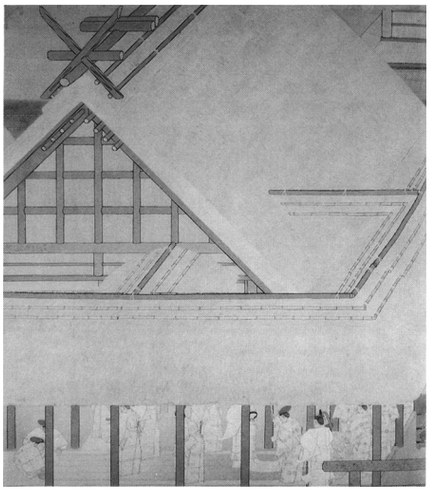


Figure 5.3
Maeda Seison, 1885–1977. *The Great Imperial Thanksgiving Rite* (Daijōsai), 1926. Color on paper; 300×270 cm. Meiji Memorial Picture Gallery, Outer Garden, Meiji Shrine, Tokyo.

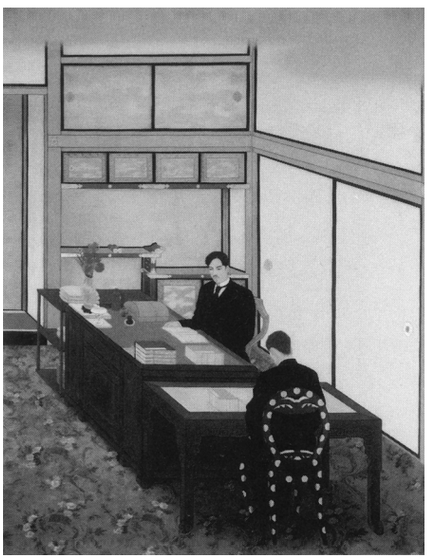


Figure 5.4
Dōmoto Inshō, 1891–1975. *His Majesty at Lessons* (Tennō no goshūgaku), 1926. Color on paper; 300×270 cm. Meiji Memorial Picture Gallery, Outer Garden, Meiji Shrine, Tokyo.

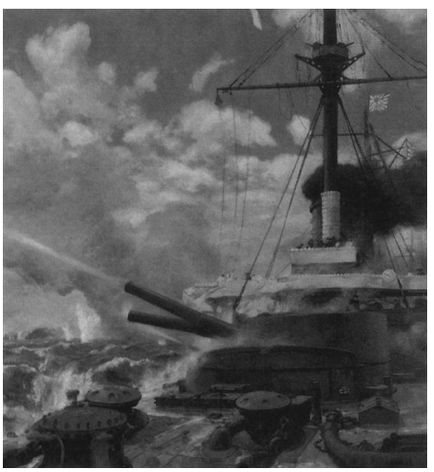


Figure 5.5
Nakamura Fusetsu, 1866–1943. *The Battle of the Japan Sea* (Nichi-Ro-eki Nihonkai kaisen), 1926. Oil on canvas; 300×270 cm. Meiji Memorial Picture Gallery, Outer Garden, Meiji Shrine, Tokyo.

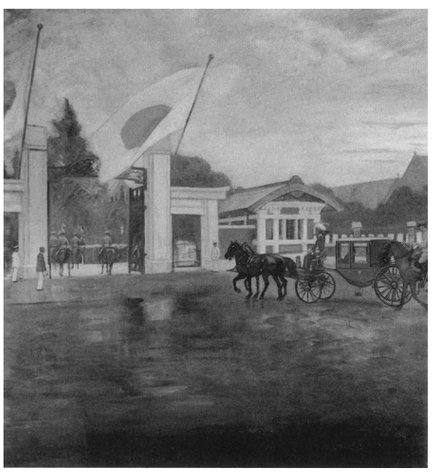


Figure 5.6
Fujishima Takeji, 1867–1943. *The Emperor at Tokyo Imperial University* (Tokyo Teikoku Daigaku gyōkō), 1926. Oil on canvas; 300×270 cm. Meiji Memorial Picture Gallery, Outer Garden, Meiji Shrine, Tokyo.

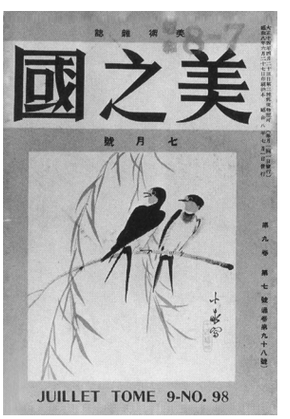


Figure 5.7
Cover of the art magazine, *Bi no kuni* (The Land of Beauty). This cover of the July 1933 issue is illustrated by Araki Jippo (1872–1944), the *Nihonga* painter and adopted son of Araki Kanpo.

Through the end of the Meiji period and into Taishō, many important young writers and critics possessed a variety of artistic enthusiasms and could provide larger contexts. Given their strong interests in European art, however, many of these young intellectuals preferred to write about Western art and its relationship to contemporary *yōga*. The critics who wrote about *Nihonga* tended to come from more scholarly backgrounds. The critic Taki Seiichi (1873–1945), for example, the oldest son of the *nanga* painter Taki Katei (1830–1901), had studied at Tokyo Imperial University and later taught at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts. He became one of the leading writers on Japanese art for his generation. Critics such as Taki, who strongly invested in the values of traditional Japanese art, were more cautious in outlook than many of the writers on *yōga*, whose eyes and minds were challenged by constant exposure to new and sometimes contradictory ideas from abroad.

Nihonga in the Culture of Interwar Japan

The complex issue of what kind of relationship works of art should bear to the society they are created in is a complicated one in any society. Authentic art, in and of itself, is not a form of journalism; nevertheless, works of art, embedded in the culture of their origin, can provide complex messages concerning their eras. Even *Nihonga*, which often seemed to hold itself aloof from contemporary concerns (and that, of course, is a message in itself), came to agitate and sometimes inspire those who chose to remain in even the most placid of waters, like ripples on a pond.

In the largest of those concentric circles lay important changes in the cultural environment of the country, and of Tokyo in particular. The Great Kantō Earthquake of 1923, in which 100,000 people died and much of the city was destroyed, brought in its wake many crucial changes. The photographs of the widespread devastation were almost as shocking as those taken some twenty years later which showed the destruction of the city at the end of the Pacific War.

Incidents that occurred in the earthquake and its aftermath were recorded by *Nihonga* artists as well. Katayama Nanpū in his 1925 *Handscroll of the Great Earthquake* (Figure 5.8) illustrated some of the destruction he witnessed at the time. Many of Tokyo's structures that had survived from the Edo period were destroyed by the earthquake and the fires that resulted. The city's Tokugawa past was destroyed. When it was rebuilt, it was as a modern national capital. Its architecture, its transportation system, and the character of its public spaces were all new.

Allied to this was a change in the public mentality. Despite the temporary setback of the earthquake, the rapid development of mass culture—opportunities for financial advancement and a lively curiosity about contemporary Western culture, ranging from the fine arts and concert music to films and popular dance steps—transformed within a few years the mentality of the capital. Some of this new confidence and new insouciance can be seen in *Scenes from Modern Life* (Plate 135), mentioned above, in which the classic scroll format was used to show the newest of Japanese passions: golf.

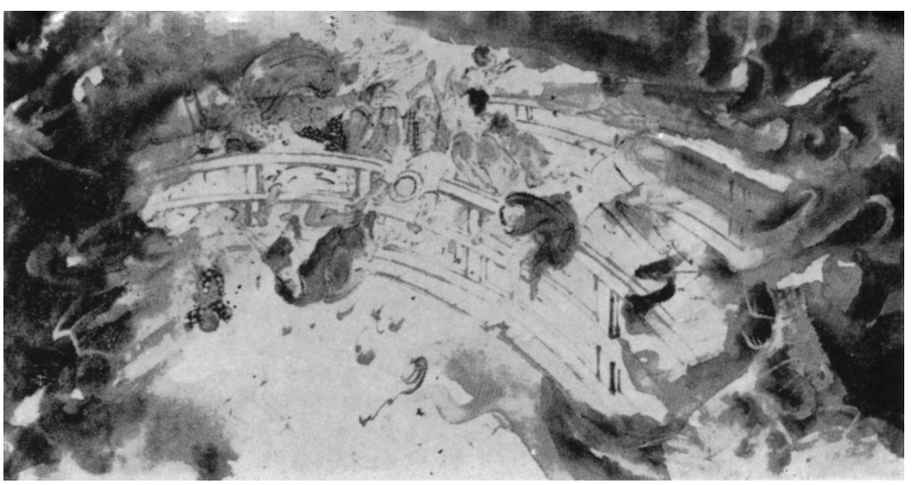


Figure 5.8
Katayama Nanpū, 1887–1980. *The Scroll of the Great Earthquake* (Daishinsai emaki), 1925. Three handscrolls: ink and color on paper; 46.5×714.5 cm.; 46.5×774 cm.; 46.5×663 cm. Private collection.

In artistic circles, the impetus of the European example and, increasingly, of the European avant-garde, continued to make itself felt on Japanese artists. For *yōga* artists, such attention was expected, as they were attempting to emulate tendencies in European art. Yet a number of *Nihonga* artists too began to take a lively interest in the broader intellectual currents of the time. In that regard, perhaps the most powerful model, and in some ways the most incisive challenge, came from the sculptor and poet Takamura Kōtarō (1883–1956), whose essays on the role of art and the artist found a wide readership.

Kōtarō was the son of Takamura Kōun (1852–1934), a talented sculptor who began his career as a traditional Tokugawa artisan and finished as an "artist" in the modern sense of the word. Fascinated by photographs he had seen of the work of Rodin, the young Kōtarō went to America and Europe to develop his talents. In Paris in 1908 and 1909, he was deeply moved by his experiences of European art and returned home the very model of a young, vital intellectual and artist. As early as 1910, Kōtarō wrote an extremely influential essay which he entitled "A Green Sun." Here, and in his later writings, Kōtarō stressed three artistic tasks he felt must be addressed by the artists of his generation, whatever their persuasion. The first was the need to find an authentic means of individual expression. The second concerned the necessity to recognize the implications involved in the status of a "Japanese artist," in which he emphatically rejected the belief that a Japanese artist can merely create "local color" in order to discharge this obligation. The third was his conviction that an artist must always have the courage to experiment. Many of the younger *Nihonga* painters who read Kōtarō's essays and grasped the purport of his message were struck and challenged by it. The call for each artist to seek an individual vision had been sounded, and few could remain deaf to the call.

The absorption of new intellectual and cultural ideas from Europe and America brought with it, just as Kōtarō had pointed out, a new impetus to define the meaning and significance of Japanese culture. Several of the most important figures among the younger generation of writers, now familiar with Western values and frames of reference, turned to survey the sensibilities of their own national past.

In 1919 there appeared arguably the most significant and influential Japanese-language travel book of this century, *Pilgrimages to Ancient Temples* (Koji junrei) by Watsuji Tetsurō (1889–1960). Watsuji, who was a youthful disciple of the novelist Natsume Sōseki, went on to become the leading philosopher of Japan in the inter-war and early postwar years. In his late twenties Watsuji decided to physically explore the heritage of his own culture. He visited sites in Kyoto and then the more ancient temples in and around the city of Nara, which had been the capital of Japan in the eighth century. In his eloquent account of discovery (still inexplicably untranslated into any Western language), Watsuji described the sites he chose, some famous, some relatively obscure, then examined his personal response to them in terms of a contemporary sensibility. His observations were often comparative in nature, since he was already familiar with European art and cultural history.

In its richness this influential book possessed a complex significance. Watsuji's basic methodology (seek out, observe, then chart the authenticity of one's own response) provided a model for engagement not only with European culture but with what often seemed to have become the "foreign culture" of Japan's own past. Traditionally, the arts had sought to portray the inner essence of the visible world. Watsuji validated his sense of necessity to go and observe nature and history directly. These lessons were not lost on the painters of *Nihonga*.

A related sensibility can be found in the work of Shiga Naoya (1883–1971), whose fiction and writings on art earned him the epithet "the God of Japanese literature." In his greatest work, the long novel *A Dark Night's Passing* (An'ya kōro), mostly written during the 1920s, the protagonist Kensaku begins his adult life as a modern, rootless, rather narcissistic intellectual who slowly finds himself drawn to the traditional Buddhist arts of Kyoto. Towards the end of the novel, he eventually makes a kind of metaphysical pilgrimage into the deep mountains overlooking the Japan Sea in order to escape and transcend the pain of his empty modern "self."

Figures like Watsuji and Shiga reveal a yearning for values, often traditional



Figure 5.9
Paul Claudel (1868–1955) as Consul General in Frankfurt, 1912.

values, that could provide some guidance to a culture felt by many to be in a confusing state of transition. In this regard, their strategies overlapped with the role *Nihonga* painters assigned themselves. In the visual arts, there was no group of artists who faced this need to develop a balance between preservation and experimentation with more acuity than did the younger generation of *Nihonga* painters. And, indeed, the larger accomplishments of the movement came to depend on the way in which this sometimes precarious balance might be maintained.

Increasing European Contacts

With the coming of World War I, artistic contacts between Japan and Europe were severely, if temporarily, curtailed. By 1919, however, a renewed association with Europe, which itself entered a period of extraordinary artistic activity during the next decades, did much to breathe new life into the contemporary creative conscience of Japanese artists in every field. Japanese artists, including *Nihonga* painters, began to travel abroad, more Europeans with artistic interests began to come to Japan, and exhibitions of contemporary *Nihonga* were sent abroad.

Of all those Europeans who visited Japan during the 1920s, probably no one took a greater interest in promoting the work of *Nihonga* painters than the French poet Paul Claudel (1868–1955) (Figure 5.9). One of France's great modern intellectual figures, and one of her most ardently Catholic writers, Claudel served as Ambassador to Japan, where he spent much of his time from 1921 through 1927.

Claudel had travelled widely in the Far East earlier in his career. A first visit to Japan in 1898 produced in him a powerful conviction of the importance of the symbolic role of nature in the traditional Japanese arts. When he returned in 1921, he began expanding that initial understanding and developed a strong interest in both traditional Japanese painting and contemporary *Nihonga*. His enthusiasm for Japanese painting led Claudel to travel to Kyoto, where he made friends with some of the most distinguished *Nihonga* painters of the period. He became particularly close to Tomita Keisen, whom he asked to provide illustrations for a series of poems he was composing about Saint Geneviève, patron saint of the city of Paris. A luxurious edition of texts and illustrations was printed in Tokyo in 1923.

The Kyoto painters arranged for Claudel to view the private collections and works of art sequestered in the storehouses of Buddhist temples. Claudel's journal entries for his visits to Kyoto are filled with notations about his meetings with such artists as Yamamoto Shunkyo, Takeuchi Seihō, and Yokoyama Taikan. With them he discussed the fundamental principles of Japanese art. The results of these discussions helped inform the composition of such works as his play *The Satin Slipper* (Le Soulier de satin) of 1929, generally considered one of the greatest French metaphysical plays of the century. It contains various scenes and characters based on Claudel's Japanese experiences, as well as some discussion on the special properties of the Japanese arts.

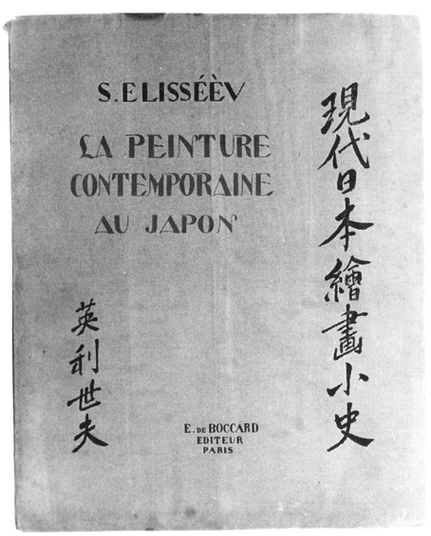


Figure 5.10
Cover of *La Peinture contemporaine au Japon* (1923).

It was thanks at least in part to Claudel that some of the masters of modern *Nihonga* had their works shown in France through a large exhibition mounted in Paris in 1922. Serge Elisséeff (1889–1975), a Russian emigre scholar of Japan then living in Paris (and later to teach Japanese at Harvard), wrote a book, *La Peinture contemporaine au Japon*, published by Boccard in Paris in 1923. This set of essays, the first study to be written in the West, was intended to take the place of an exhibition catalogue, which was never published. The book reveals the wide range of work accomplished by painters active in the Taishō period, some since forgotten (Figure 5.10).

Other exhibitions followed. An important exhibition of 177 paintings by eighty painters was sent to Rome in 1930, under the sponsorship of Ōkura Kishichirō, whose father had made his fortune in mining and engineering projects and begun his own private art collection (presently housed in the Ōkura Shūkokan Museum on the grounds of the Ōkura Hotel in central Tokyo). The exhibition centered on the work of three of the most important artists of the period: Yokoyama Taikan, Kawai Gyokudō, and Takeuchi Seihō (Figure 5.11). Excited by the space available in the elegant exhibition hall, Yokoyama Taikan helped supervise the installation of a

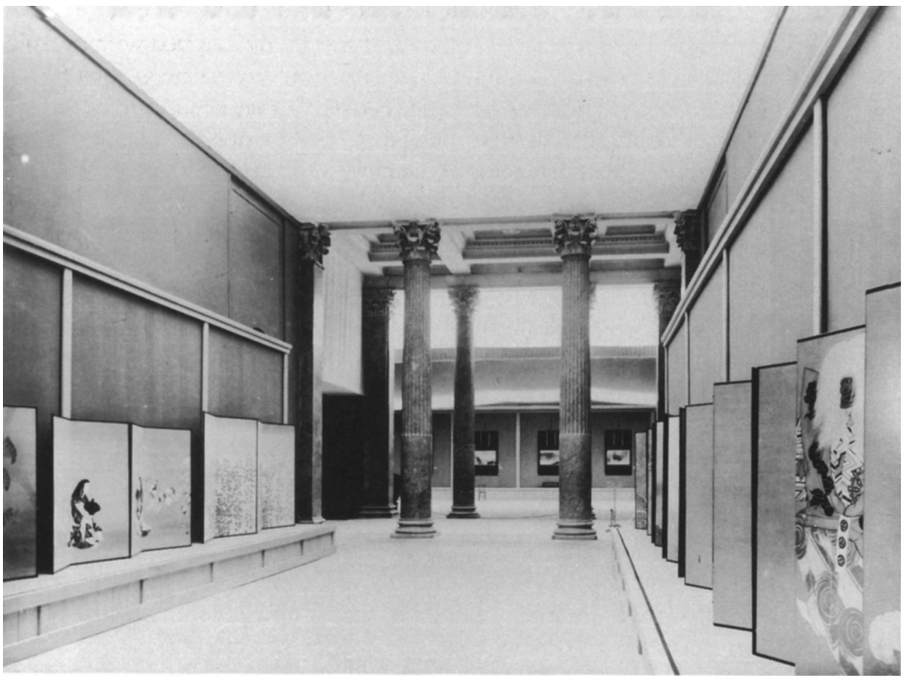


Figure 5.11
Installation view of *Esposizione d'Arte Giapponese*, Rome, 1930.

Japanese room, complete with traditional fittings and *tatami* mats. Taikan's *Spring in Rome*, 1930 (Plate 147) is a souvenir of that visit.

***Nihonga* Artists As Travellers**

An increasing ability to travel, both within Asia and to the West, allied with an increasing curiosity on the part of younger artists, led interwar painters to go abroad during the more formative stages of their careers. In one sense, these voyages were built on the understood importance of the earlier travels by Takeuchi Seihō, who had visited Europe in 1900; Shimomura Kanzan, who had been to England in 1903, where he became interested in the techniques of European watercolor; and Yamamoto Shunkyo, whose *Snow in the Rockies*, 1905 (Plate 44) shows the techniques of *Nihonga* applied to American scenery. Other artists visited India, China, and Korea. Such a colorful work as Imamura Shikō's *Woman Drawing Water, Men Herding Ox*, 1914 (Plate 146) brought new colors and a fascination with the romance of a culture such as India's to the Japanese public. Most of these earlier trips were undertaken during the maturity of the artists; indeed, they were often possible because of the artists' relative fame. In the interwar period, however, such travels more often occurred while the artists were younger. Their early encounters with European art—which, on the whole they could not see in Japan, other than in reproduction—often led to an increased assimilation of fresh ideas.

Here, as so often, the Kyoto painters took the lead. Takeuchi Seihō, remembering the significance of his own trip to Europe two decades before, encouraged a number of his disciples, among them Tsuchida Bakusen, Ono Chikkyō, and Irie Hakō, to visit Europe.

Through the essays of Takamura Kōtarō and articles on famous Western painters in the magazine *Shirakaba* (White Birch, founded in 1910), which was instrumental in introducing current developments in European art to Japan, Chikkyō became increasingly fascinated by what he termed "the force of the fast tempo of modern Western art." "In terms both of artistic fragrance and graphic freshness," he wrote, "we were struck with Cézanne's reality, the sensualism of Renoir, Rousseau's openheartedness, the ardor of Van Gogh, and the wild roughness of Gauguin."[3] Now, they could go to Europe and see for themselves.

The group travelled together, moving broadly through France, Italy, and England in the early 1920s (Figure 5.12). Bakusen was most taken with Gauguin and other French painters, while Hakō reserved his ultimate admiration for the Italian

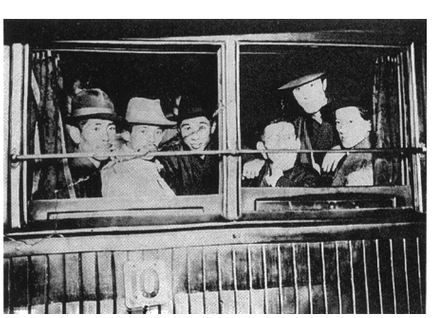


Figure 5.12
Ono Chikkyō (second from left) and Tsuchida Bakusen (second from right) at the Kyoto Station, departing for their European trip, 1921.



Figure 5.13
Kobayashi Kokei and his colleagues in Egypt, 1922.



Figure 5.14
Attributed to Gu Kaizhi, c.344–c.406. *Admonitions of the Instructress*, Six Dynasties Period. Handscroll: color on silk; 24.8×350 cm. British Museum, London.

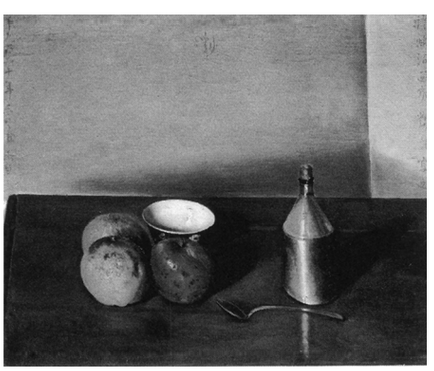


Figure 5.15
Kishida Ryūsei, 1891–1929. *Still-Life: Three Red Apples, a Teacup, a Tin Bottle, and a Spoon* (Seibutsu: Akai ringo san-ko, chawan, buriki kan, saji), 1920. Oil on canvas; 36.5×44 cm. Ōhara Museum of Art, Kurashiki.

primitives whose work he believed contained both a monumentality and a use of flat surface related to his own developing aesthetic. Bakusen's *Renoir's Garden* (Plate 149) and Hakō's *Green Grove* (Plate 148) show the results of their travel.

In 1922, the important Tokyo painters Kobayashi Kokei and Maeda Seison made a similar trip (Figure 5.13). Seison, inspired by the example of his mentor Imamura Shikō, had already made a visit to Asia. His *Handscroll of Korea* (Plate 145), created as the result of his visit there in 1915, was one of his early successes.

Both painters showed eclectic and broad interest in European art and culture, as the two Kokei paintings, both entitled *Laundry Place* (Plates 151 and 152) make clear. For Kokei in particular, however, his travel to Europe brought him a new regard for classical Asian art. Kokei and Seison were commissioned to copy the famous painting attributed to Gu Kaizhi (c.344–c.406), *Admonitions of the Instructress*, one of the treasures of the British Museum (Figure 5.14). The careful execution of their task took several months. The experience helped reinforce Kokei's interest in the classical Chinese and Japanese subject matter that was so important in the works of his mature period.

During the interwar period, the expense and difficulties of travel forced many painters to rely on reproductions for their knowledge of Western art. Hayami Gyoshū, for example, first learned about Western painting through such means. His study of a book on the sixteenth-century German painter Hans Holbein helped strengthen his growing friendship with another Japanese admirer of Holbein, the eminent *yōga* painter Kishida Ryūsei (1891–1929). Ryūsei soon shared with Gyoshū his appreciation, developed through books and reproductions, of such earlier European artists as Albrecht Dürer and Jan van Eyck. Ryūsei himself produced a series of striking still-lifes that show his indebtedness to those European masters (Figure 5.15). The results of Gyoshū's new enthusiasms can be seen in *Autumn Eggplants and Black Teabowl* and *Teacup and Fruit* (Plates 104 and 105), both from 1921. They suggest the spare and linear qualities associated with these European painters.

Kawabata Ryūshi's trip to the United States, on the other hand, represented the climactic artistic encounter in his life. Ryūshi had begun his career as a *yōga* painter. He began to work as a newspaper illustrator in 1908, and became interested in *Nihonga* techniques due to his colleague on the newspaper, the painter Hirafuku Hyakusui. In 1913, Ryūshi went to San Francisco and later visited New York, where he wished to see some of Rodin's sculptures. He next made his way to Boston in order to visit Boston's Museum of Fine Arts, which had a superior collection of Western art.



Figure 5.16
Artist unknown. Detail from *Scrolls of Events in the Heiji Period* (Heiji monogatari emaki), 13th century. Handscroll: ink and color on paper; height 41.3 cm. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; Fenollosa-Weld Collection.

Unbeknownst to Ryūshi, the collections of classical Japanese art assembled by Ernest Fenollosa (1853–1908), William S. Bigelow (1850–1926), and Okakura Tenshin (1862–1913), had been given to the Boston museum and were by then partially installed. Confronted with his own artistic heritage, the young Japanese artist was overwhelmed (Figure 5.16).

> In order to study Western art while in Japan, I made every attempt to absorb the modern movements with all the diligence and energy I could muster. And for that reason, I had for a long period of time paid no attention whatsoever to the classical art of Japan or to the traditions of Asian art. Indeed, my point of view was as one who was not even Japanese. And so it was that only after leaving my own culture, when I caught a glimpse of the art bequeathed to us by our predecessors, that I came to respond with admiration, and in just the same fashion that a Western viewer might, to the beauties of Japanese art. And when I took consciousness in turn of the fact that I myself was from the nation that had created such splendid art, I soon felt something welling up in my heart.... As I looked at the *Scrolls of Events of the Heiji Period*, I came, without explicitly acknowledging the fact, to embrace this "Japan."[4]

The encounter in Boston turned Ryūshi's attention towards becoming a practitioner of the art of *Nihonga*. He was never to turn back.

The Art of *Nihonga* in Interwar Japan: Innovation Within Tradition

Even a cursory glance at *Nihonga* paintings of the interwar period reveals at once the existence of a range of work quite different in subject matter, style, and aesthetic effect from the art created in the preceding Meiji period.

We begin with a generalization that is based to some extent on the comments made by the artists of the interwar period themselves, as well as upon the evidence of the works of art. The *Nihonga* created in this period seems to have sustained two sometimes overlapping yet ultimately contradictory ideals: the preservation of tradition and the need for experimentation.

The attitude of the Meiji *Nihonga* painters, particularly as codified in the views of such influential artists as Yokoyama Taikan and Yasuda Yukihiko in the Reorganized Japan Art Institute, served to encourage a firmly traditional emphasis on the aesthetics of *Nihonga*. Indeed, by 1920, the directors of the Institute removed the category of *yōga* from its exhibitions altogether. The greatest of the artists of a more classical temperament, such as Hayami Gyoshū, consistently maintained a desire to bring together the best ideals of the traditional and contemporary periods. But in its least creative phase, this emphasis on the past risked producing a moribund orthodoxy that could move *Nihonga*, in subject matter, ideals, and technique, ever further away from the concerns and aspirations of a rapidly changing culture.

One form of preservation lay in the continued use of traditional themes and

subject matter, which the painters knew many of their viewers would take pleasure in recognizing. One hallowed example is the *Eight Views of Ōmi* (Ōmi hakkei), a selection of eight views of Lake Biwa. Since the beginning of the sixteenth century these eight views had been a standard theme in ink painting. The theme itself was a Japanese variation on the work of the eleventh-century Northern Song Dynasty painter Song Di, who chose eight scenes to paint in the area of Hunan Province to create the precedent of the *Eight Views of the Xiao and Xiang*. Both Chinese and Japanese conceits depict similar subjects: windy days, sunsets, returning sailboats, evening temple bells, and other similarly poetic topics. These themes were much used in both painting and poetry in the Tokugawa period.

Imamura Shikō's *Eight Views of Ōmi*, 1912 (Plate 128) presented viewers with a mixture of old and new. True, the subject was fixed. But Shikō did not create his paintings by copying the views (often imaginary) painted by traditional masters. As did many modern artists, Shikō sketched directly from nature. He actually visited Lake Biwa in 1912, made sketches of the actual spots identified in the series, and only then set out to create these fresh and striking works.

In 1918, Yokoyama Taikan, in a variation on the same theme, created his *Handscroll of Nio-no-ura* (Plate 115), the ancient name for Lake Biwa. Here the identity of the subject matter has slightly shifted but, as Steven Owyoung has pointed out in his remarks on the painting, the techniques employed to create the scene pay homage to the painters of China's Song Dynasty.

The same subject matter was taken up still again in 1926 by Shimomura Kanzan in his *Eight Views of Ōmi* (Plate 127). In many ways, the later work by Kanzan is the most conservative of the three, both in the choice of subject matter and in the artist's admittedly prodigious technique used to suggest older traditional Japanese and Chinese styles. Yet compared to Shikō's experiments, the work risks seeming retrograde for its time.

A second means of preserving tradition involved a renewed intellectual interest by painters in repossessing the older traditions of Chinese and Japanese painting. As noted above, younger painters brought up in an atmosphere of rapidly increasing cultural diversity felt, as did Kobayashi Kokei in London or Kawabata Ryūshi in Boston, that their encounters with actual examples of East Asian masterworks helped lead them into an intellectual study of the art and customs of their own classical art. They were anxious to rediscover the traditions of ancient painting in the same fashion that the philosopher Watsuji Tetsurō, mentioned above, attempted to repossess the epochs of Nara and ancient Kyoto through his visits there.

Study, even intellectual understanding, does not necessarily produce a lively, living work of art. The result may constitute no more than an antiquarian rerendering. Perhaps nowhere in this exhibition can the challenges and difficulties of this attempt to repossess the past be better observed than in the 1933 painting by Kikuchi Keigetsu, *Blackened Teeth* (Plate 82). Here the artist has shown his exhaustive knowledge of ancient customs and artistic technique in the style of the painting, which harks back to the *hakubyō* (literally, "white drawing") techniques employed in the Nara period, thus predating even the venerable *Yamato-e* tradition. The artist has chosen all the appropriate details for the costume, posture, and other elements he has chosen for rendering the figure. Whether this knowledge marshalled by the artist contributes to the beauty and effectiveness of the work, however, may well occasion discussion for viewers in the 1990s, when few Japanese art lovers possess the kind of knowledge that can provide for the pleasures of recognition.

Parallel to a fascination with the classical arts there developed an interest shown by a number of painters in classical Japanese literature. By the turn of the century, the canon of Japanese classics for modern readers had been firmly fixed. Various popular editions, with necessary annotations, were issued by a succession of publishers. These texts often provided inspiration for independent works of art.

Two of the most famous Japanese texts found interpreters among *Nihonga* painters. The first of them, the *Tale of the Bamboo Cutter* (Taketori monogatari), dates from the ninth or tenth century. Its authorship is uncertain, but it is usually regarded as the oldest surviving work of fiction in the Japanese language. Kobayashi

Kokei, enchanted by the visual possibilities of the charming and fanciful tale, used it as the basis for two sets of scrolls. In his *Shipwreck* (Plate 52), Kokei shows one of the princess's suitors in a perilous sea, searching for a magic jewel.

Maeda Seison's 1918 *Handscroll of Koremori at Mount Kōya* (Plate 53) is based on a tragic incident in the greatest of the medieval Japanese literary classics, *Tale of the Heike*, which recounts in fictionalized and heightened form important historical incidents in the disastrous twelfth-century civil wars that destroyed the political power of the court in Kyoto. The text, which inspired numerous other works of fiction, theater (Noh plays in particular), and works of art, contains a number of scenes of high tragedy. None is more moving than the escape from the capital by Taira no Koremori (1158–1184), the upright grandson of the evil villain of the tale, Taira no Kiyomori (1118–1181). The story, well known to virtually any Japanese reader, takes on a new resonance in this strikingly bold work, which Seison based on his own travels through the mountainous countryside near Mount Kōya.

A number of experiments enlivened and revitalized the *Nihonga* of this period. For viewers outside of Japan, coming upon these works in the 1990s for the first time and unfamiliar with the shifting idioms of twentieth-century Japanese art, the nature and effectiveness of these attempts at renewal and renovation may not at first be apparent. For Japanese viewers and connoisseurs familiar with these traditions, however, images of older paintings can be conjured up, even if unconsciously, to stand in juxtaposition with these newer works. Indeed, these newer paintings may well require the presence, in the mind's eye at least, of art created in the older traditions, precisely in order to show off their new and experimental qualities. In that sense, appreciation of *Nihonga*, indeed perhaps of any art, requires memory and intelligence as well as the skills of the "naked eye" alone (if indeed that platonic possibility can even be said to exist). Response involves recognition and comparison.

Many of these experiments involve a growing presence of the real world and contemporary culture into the traditions of artistic representation. One of the most obvious of these is the introduction of new subject matter. The tendency, still strong in Meiji painting, to favor traditional themes finally started to yield. By the time of the Teiten exhibitions, beginning in 1919, contemporary genre scenes of a sort seldom seen in earlier painting began to proliferate. Dōmoto Inshō's *Hill*, 1924 (Plate 121) portrayed an unprepossessing neighborhood in Kyoto with the charm of a painting and the accuracy of a photograph. The artist has found room in his conception for all sorts of persons and objects, from the humblest to the most fanciful.

Ikeda Yōson's *Osaka in Snow* (Plate 122), painted four years later in 1928, captures with even greater skill the tonality of a modern urban landscape. The muted, gentle snow may provide an element of nature familiar from more traditional Japanese painting, but the city portrayed is wholly of this century.

Another category of subject matter that grew during this period was portraits taken from life. Portraiture has a long and often distinguished history in traditional Japanese art, but the idea of using a live model (or a photograph) is a fairly recent development which began in earnest only in the nineteenth century. By 1910 and after, portraits "drawn from life" were increasingly appreciated. In 1916, Yasuda Yukihiko created his lively *Portrait of Imamura Shikō* (Plate 87), commissioned for a memorial exhibition held after the artist's death that same year. His subject deceased, Yukihiko worked from a photograph. Tamaki Suekazu, in his 1926 portrait of an assistant in a dry-goods shop (Plate 88), depicted his model directly, with striking results. Kaburaki Kiyokata was faced with still another problem in creating his *Portrait of San'yūtei Enchō* (Plate 86). Although he knew the famous storyteller well when the artist himself was a child, he had to recreate the portrait from memories virtually three decades old. Whatever Kiyokata's sources, the picture suggests a particular person and occasion with great skill.

Finally, just as the rediscovery of classical Japanese literature provided the subject matter for a number of *Nihonga* painters, striking illustrations for modern novels and other literary texts were created by a number of artists in this period.

Kaburaki Kiyokata made a specialty of illustrating the work of the novelist Izumi Kyōka (1873–1939) (Plate 136); and Maeda Seison, while still a young artist, did newspaper illustrations for the works of two novelists popular at the time, Oguri Fūyō (1875–1926) and Tokuda Shūsei (1871–1943).

Along with new subject matter, there was an attempt to create new techniques of expression, among them a certain lightening of the palette, which may bear witness to an interest on the part of a number of *Nihonga* painters in European watercolor. There was a fresh use of color and of shadow as well. Both of these changes probably find their sources in responses to Western conceptions of space and light by *Nihonga* artists of the 1920s and 1930s.

Another striking development in this period, and one which would reach its fruition in the postwar years, was a tendency towards abstraction. The kind of simplification towards essential forms of moving water found in Tsuji Kakō's *Calm Waves*, c.1920 (Plate 118) may owe some elements in its conception to the traditional Rinpa style. But a painting such as Fukuda Heihachirō's *Ripples*, painted twelve years later in 1932 (Plate 120), has moved those watery shapes into still another visual context. Heihachirō's sense of abstraction seems to pay homage to modern European strategies of representing space and light. It remains, even today, a striking and original conception.

Such, then, is the range of challenge and accomplishment during the years 1919–1935. If more traditional values were upheld in the yearly Teiten exhibitions, *Nihonga* artists found themselves freer than before to pursue more personal options in smaller groups or in personal exhibitions. Yet, on the whole, judged in terms of the entire hundred years of the movement, those who successfully managed to break free from what they perceived as the restraints imposed by the government's official salon are the artists most appreciated today. It is particularly striking that probably the three greatest Tokyo painters of the period, Maeda Seison, Kawabata Ryūshi, and Hayami Gyoshū, did not come from artistic families, were not trained at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts, and had strong interests in Western painting. Indeed, it was the sense among both painters and a segment of the public alike that the Teiten, like the Bunten before it, had failed to develop the best artists of the period, which led to still another attempted change in 1935.

Notes

Unless otherwise noted, all translations are by the author.

1. Tsuchida Bakusen wrote a letter to a patron in February 1914, which begins, "Bunten is an organization that reveals a real vulgarity. The works exhibited there deserve no better than to be destroyed," and goes on to list his various dissatisfactions with the official system. Portions of Bakusen's letter appear in Kawakita Michiaki and Takashina Shūji, *Kindai Nihon kaiga-shi* (The History of Modern Japanese Painting), (Tokyo: Chūō Kōron-sha, 1988): 260–61.
2. Quoted in Higashiyama Kaii, ed., *Ga* (Painting), (Tokyo: Sakuhinsha, 1984): 32.
3. Quoted in *Kokuga Sōsaku Kyōkai no ayumi I: Dai 1-kai-ten kara dai 3-kai-ten* (The History of the Association for the Creation of National Painting 1: From the First to Third Exhibitions), exh. cat. (Kasaoka: Chikkyō Art Museum, 1983): 86.
4. Quoted in *Kawabata Ryūshi: Ryūshi to Seiryū-sha* (Ryūshi and Seiryū-sha), *Kindai no bijutsu* (Modern Art), vol. 34 (May 1976): 25.

6.
Encountering Blank Spaces: A Decade of War, 1935–1945

J. Thomas Rimer

By the mid-1930s, the cultural climate in Japan began to darken as the escalating war with China continued and military pressures on the civilian government began to exert an ever greater influence on the cultural life of the nation. The country was soon to enter that period many Japanese have referred to as the "dark valley" of the war years, from which it would not emerge until 1945.

Social and political difficulties of those years were not relegated to the colonies or other Asian countries in which the Japanese military forces were becoming increasingly involved. A number of army officers stationed within the country were growing more and more impatient with what they took to be the weakness and corruption of civilian politics. In an attempted coup d'état on February 26, 1936, a group of young officers attacked some high officials in their homes, killing the Finance Minister and other prominent dignitaries. They insisted their acts were carried out "in the name of the emperor." The emperor himself, when he learned of the incident, insisted that the men be brought to trial. The incident—so brilliantly described by Mishima Yukio (1925–1970) in his 1969 novel, *Runaway Horses* (Honba)—was symptomatic both of the ascendancy of a dangerously romantic militarism and of the emotional fatigue of the liberal intellectuals, who had previously set a tone of openness in which the country had flourished culturally and artistically for several decades.

A similar sense of fatigue seemed to spring up in artistic and intellectual circles as well. In the early 1920s, avant-garde poets like the Surrealist Nishiwaki Junzaburō (1894–1982), *yōga* painters such as Saeki Yūzō (1898–1928), or *Nihonga* painters such as Tsuchida Bakusen, were stimulated and excited by living, working, and travelling in Europe. By 1936, however, when Japan's leading modernist writer Yokomitsu Riichi (1898–1947) went to Paris, London, and Berlin, he recorded in his widely admired but unfinished novel, *The Sadness of Travel* (Ryoshū), an ominous sense of intellectual exhaustion and a longing to return to what seemed the more comfortable milieu of Japanese culture. His attitudes were typical of those who, during the war years, would talk of the need in Japan to "overcome the modern." On the long train ride back to Japan through the Soviet Union, the protagonist of the novel, whose name is Yashiro, remarks that he knows that he has been given the leisure time on this long trip to sort out his thoughts concerning his European experience, yet he can only experience wave after wave of a terrible listlessness: things were "jangling around in his head," he felt, and he could "find no space in which to think *about* his experiences." These phrases anticipate remarks written in 1946 by the critic Suzuki Osamu, who said of Japanese painters during the war that they "encountered blank spaces," such as might be found in medieval Zen paintings which, as inhabitants of the modern age, they were unable to fill in: in Suzuki's words, the wartime painters could only "impose one blank upon another."[1]

If the cultural and spiritual world within which art could be created was narrowing, so were the social and government structures that were needed to support it. In 1935, Matsuda Genji (1875–1936), the Education Minister, took the lead (as had his predecessor in 1919, Nakahashi Tokugorō) in still another attempt to reorganize the Imperial Academy of Fine Arts (Teikoku Bijutsu-in) and the Teiten exhibitions. The reasons in 1935 were not dissimilar from those put forth in 1919. Matsuda and his colleagues sought to establish an overarching government-affiliated organization, one with authority to "collect together men of talent," as one spokesperson put it. Art and the nation were to be as one. Such was the attempt, and again the efforts failed. Some of the best talent remained outside the government-sponsored exhibitions, and it was difficult to woo such independent and financially successful artists as Maeda Seison and Kawabata Ryūshi into a conservative, umbrella organization.

Before any of these plans could be carried out completely, Matsuda himself died suddenly in 1936, and the political situation, typified by the February 26 attempted coup, increasingly deteriorated. The situation continued more or less as before. The Teiten exhibition, now renamed the Shin-Bunten (New Bunten) remained conservative in the aesthetic proclivities of its judges, and the smaller independent groups continued to provide outlets for many of the younger and more adventuresome *Nihonga* painters. Some of these artists shown in the current exhibition—Iwahashi Eien, Fukuda Toyoshirō, and others—were to develop substantial postwar careers. Only the coming hostilities could force a closer union of art and national politics.

There was no question on the part of important Japanese government officials that the visual arts could and should be enlisted as a cultural arm of national policy. These attitudes proved important in the area of foreign policy as well. The kind of cultural exchange so favored by many nations in the postwar period had an effective predecessor in a large exhibition of Japanese classical art sent to Berlin in 1939, as a result of a treaty for cultural exchange signed by the two countries the previous year. On the German side, Göring served as Chief of the Sponsoring Committee and Ribbentrop as President of the Committee of Honor. Some 125 works by such great artists as Sesshū (1420–1506), Sesson (1504–1589?), Ogata Kōrin (1658–1716), Maruyama Ōkyo (1733–1795), and Kanō Motonobu (1476–1559) were sent to Berlin on this occasion. Photographs still exist of Hitler and his entourage dutifully examining the grandeurs of classical Japanese art.

Beginning in the late 1930s, at a time of continuing hostilities in China, contemporary art, both *yōga* and *Nihonga*, increasingly came under the control of the government. The Army and Navy began to recruit artists to travel to war zones to create "campaign record paintings" (*sakusen kiroku-ga*) to chronicle the progress of the war. With the promulgation of the National Mobilization Act in 1938, government officials found a new means of exercising more obvious controls to focus the efforts of artists and intellectuals on what military and government officials considered the tasks facing the nation, now on a wartime footing. In the realm of painting, independent exhibition groups were quickly consolidated under new titles, such as the Federation of Art Organizations (Bijutsu Dantai Renmei), founded in 1940; the Japan Painters' Patriotic Society (Nihon Gaka Hōkokukai), established in March of 1942; and other similar groups. These activities culminated in the establishment of the Japan Art Patriotic Society (Nihon Bijutsu Hōkokukai), set up by the Ministry of Education in May of 1943. Towards the end of the war, in 1944, the government closed down all painting exhibitions, including the Shin-Bunten (New Bunten) exhibition, replacing it with a special exhibition of war paintings. Any natural relationships between artwork and audience were thereby destroyed. And by the early months of 1945, frequent air raids made even those exhibitions impossible.

Not only were opportunities for the display of new art reduced and controlled, but the government also regulated the distribution of art supplies, some imported from China. Shortages and government control caused the publication of art magazines to subside. In July of 1941, the government forced a consolidation of the 38 magazines then being published into eight; by 1944, only one magazine was permitted to publish all activities concerned with the visual arts.

In their efforts to control the production of art in terms of state objectives, the government attempted, and in some cases with success, to enlist the help of senior painters, just as they did with writers, artists, and intellectuals in every field. Hoping to win them over to the military's vision of a "holy war," government officials could then use the older painters' prestige to help legitimize the military's war policies. In the field of *Nihonga*, that role was played by the venerable Yokoyama Taikan, who by the late 1930s had become the elder statesman of the movement, at least in the eyes of many artists and officials in the Tokyo area. Taikan gave money from the sale of his works to the military forces, as did the beloved Kyoto painter Uemura Shōen. In 1943, Taikan himself became the chairman of the Japan Art Patriotic Society.

During the war years, both *yōga* and *Nihonga* painters contributed to the war effort in a variety of ways. Some sold their pictures to raise funds for the military.

Some, under government sponsorship, continued to create pictorial records of the war. Such a practice of close cooperation, of course, was by no means limited to Japan. In Britain, for example, such painters as Henry Moore and Graham Sutherland were appointed as official war artists to record the situation of the nation at war. In Japan, as elsewhere, artists and the public alike reasonably saw these efforts as patriotic gestures taken to aid the nation.

With the end of the war in 1945, all of these assumptions and activities came quickly to a halt. The prestige and reputations of those who had participated were damaged, certainly among some portion of the public interested in art. The time had come, it was widely felt, to assess the damages and, when necessary, to lay blame. That process was begun even before the end of 1945. Some fifty years later, no final conclusions have yet been reached concerning many of these matters, since much of the art created during the war years has been destroyed, confiscated, or hidden away. There are, however, certain general observations to be made.

Paintings in this exhibition by the older generation of artists still active in the wartime period reveal little direct reflection of the stresses and challenges of those times. The late works of Murakami Kagaku, who died in 1939, such as his *Arhat* (Plate 74) or *Pine Trees on a Rocky Mountain* (Plate 123), confirm the fact of his withdrawal from art circles since the late 1920s, when his work began to take on an increasingly contemplative and otherworldly character. The *Monkey*, c.1940 (Plate 99) of Hashimoto Kansetsu, who died in 1945, owes more to the painter's long allegiance to themes in classical Chinese art than to any desire to render aspects of the contemporary world. Some have interpreted one of Takeuchi Seihō's final works, *Spring Snow* (Plate 101), painted shortly before his death in 1942, as a kind of mournful farewell to the art and society which he knew; but whatever the ultimate meaning of this remarkably moving work, its symbols bear no overt relation to the politics of the day. Uemura Shōen's *Late Autumn*, 1943 (Plate 84), on the other hand, reveals a subtle change in emphasis in her work. Shōen's Taishō and early Shōwa paintings most often portray elegant women, sometimes from the demimonde. In this wartime painting of 1943, however, she has created in an appropriately subdued style the image of a woman carrying out a domestic chore. Such subject matter is certainly more in keeping with the austerity of the war years.

Some younger writers and artists became, as one of them put it, "internal exiles," who purposefully abandoned their creative work and took up other careers in order to survive. Others, especially after the heavy bombings of the cities commenced, moved to the countryside to farm and await the end.

The visual evidence of the art from this period that can be located and examined even now does not permit any facile judgments, moral or artistic. There have certainly been no claims that the period produced, either in *yōga* or in *Nihonga*, any war art to be judged on the standards of such European masters as Goya or Delacroix, to say nothing of Picasso, although there seems to be a growing opinion in Japan that certain works of the *yōga* painter Fujita Tsuguji (1886–1968) reveal considerable artistic accomplishment. Even so, by what standards, and from what viewpoint, are such accomplishments to be measured?

Many of the debates at the end of the war were caught up in attempting to define what the role of such painting turned out to have been, or should have been. For some, war paintings of the period might be regarded as a sort of artistic journalism. In such a context, some writers have felt, a case might be made that such art should be regarded as morally "neutral." For others, it seemed best to judge war art according to the canons and criteria of history painting, since many of these works do depict the history of the times.

One of the reasons for these often awkward and disparate attitudes and judgments may well have been caused by the fact that, in the long history of Japanese art, little had been developed before modern times in the way of any strong visual traditions for recording the travails of war. True, there are Heian scrolls depicting the outbreak of fighting, such as the Heiji scroll at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, which so excited the imagination of Kawabata Ryūshi. And there have been depictions of warriors when scenes from the *Tale of the Heike* or other war chronicles

were used as subject matter. On the whole, however, there was little available in terms of models and precedents before the modern period. In the Meiji period, however, painters and artists, particularly before the ascendancy of war photography, did travel with the Japanese military during the Sino-Japanese War of 1894–1895 and, to a lesser extent, during the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–1905. These efforts produced a good deal of popular art, from wood-block prints to accomplished "on the spot" sketches and even paintings (mostly *yōga*). Still, little was intended to be enduring.

There are, of course, examples of Meiji *Nihonga* which take up war themes, such as Kubota Beisen's *Battles by Land and Sea* (Plate 28), but the generally perceived decorative qualities of *Nihonga* were evidently deemed then, as in the later Pacific War, relatively unsuitable for depicting the sometimes gruesome, and often moving, evocations of combat managed by Fujita. *Nihonga* artists shied away from the direct depiction of such carnage not, as some Japanese critics have remarked, because they were in principle against the brutality of war, but rather because they believed that they possessed few pictorial strategies with which to come to grips with such subject matter.

A few examples will show the range of what was attempted within the parameters of *Nihonga*. Although Yasuda Yukihiko's depiction of one of the great heroes of the war, Admiral Yamamoto Isoroku (1884–1943), appears to be a typical modern *Nihonga* portrait, it might be considered a war painting as well (Figure 6.1). The strong central figure portrayed and the number of specific details in the background, unlike the quiescent figures and spare backgrounds often found in the genre, make clear to the viewer that the Admiral is on a battle ship and is taking active command of the situation. Even more vigorous scenes reveal a certain stately



Figure 6.1
Yasuda Yukihiko, 1884–1978. *A Portrait of Admiral Yamamoto Isoroku* (Yamamoto Isoroku Gensui zō), 1944. Hanging scroll: color on silk; 248.5×124.5 cm. Art Museum, Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music.

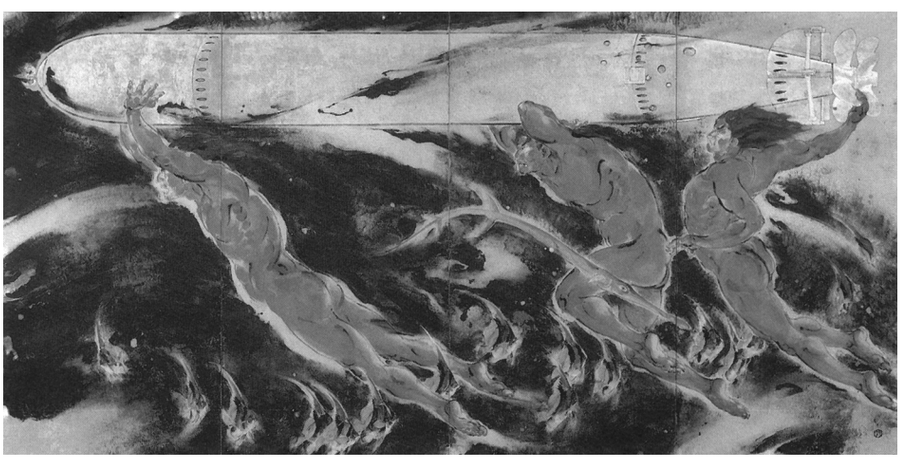


Figure 6.2
Kawabata Ryūshi, 1885–1966. *Gods of Torpedoes* (Suiraijin), 1944. Originally four-panel screen: color on paper; 243×485 cm. Ryūshi Memorial Art Museum of Ōta-ku, Tokyo.

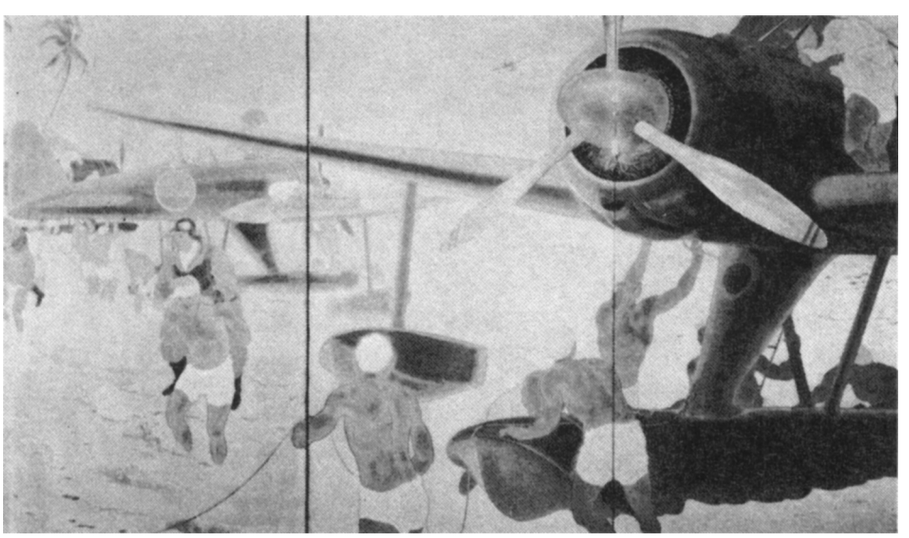


Figure 6.3
Yamaguchi Kayō, 1899–1984. *Landing Strip for Seaplanes on the Arafura Sea* (Arafurakai no suijōki kichi), 1943.

poise. Kawabata Ryūshi, one of the most distinguished and independent-minded painters of the period, did in fact produce a certain number of war paintings, but they are often fantastic or allegorical in nature, such as his *Gods of Torpedoes*, 1944 (Figure 6.2). Fukuda Toyoshirō's evocative scrolls of the Malaysia campaign (Plate 138), which reveal his skill in using this venerable format for such unusual subject matter, seem more rooted in the traditions of landscape painting than in the more commonly understood conceptions of war art.

Another well-known work of the period by the Kyoto artist Yamaguchi Kayō (1899–1984) depicts a landing strip for Japanese planes on the Arafura Sea, that body of water which lies between Indonesia and Australia (Figure 6.3). Yet the flat and decorative treatment given the airplane and the figures below suggests little of the heat and struggle of battle. It reveals instead something of those same techniques used by Kayō in the creation of his beautiful and decorative paintings of animals, a talent he shared with his teacher, Nishimura Goun (Plate 98).

Often paintings on historical subjects, such as Kikuchi Keigetsu's *Welcoming the Imperial Carriage*, 1943 (Plate 139), seem on the surface to have little to do with the war and are only intended to reflect the contemporary situation indirectly. Nevertheless, those viewing the picture could easily identify the kneeling samurai as Kusunoki Masashige (d.1336), long considered the paragon of loyalty to the imperial institution and the subject of a number of Keigetsu's works created during these years. Masashige here pays homage to the emperor, who remains invisible. The message of the virtue of absolute loyalty is powerfully conveyed, even though presented in a muted and refracted fashion.

By the end of 1945, the war was over, and the urban areas of Japan were in ruins. Many of the *Nihonga* artists felt discredited and chagrined over their earlier enthusiasms. Many attempted simply to put the time behind them, yet their very silence was a cause of further resentment by others. Moving artistic expressions of mourning, sadness, and regret over war and destruction can be found in the works of both *Nihonga* and *yōga* painters from those early postwar years. Perhaps the best known of these artists in this country is Maruki Iri (b.1901), who has become internationally famous for *Nihonga* paintings that he and his wife made as a record of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima, such as *Red Plums*, 1967 (Figure 6.4)



Figure 6.4
Maruki Iri, b.1901. *Red Plums* (Kōbai), 1967. Two-panel screen: color on paper; 182×182 cm. Maruki Gallery for the Hiroshima Panels Foundation.

Despite such powerful visual evidence, however, it appears that there developed in these postwar years no effective means to carry out a dialogue between the various segments of Japanese society over the ultimate significance of the war for the nation. Many individuals have continued to speak out, yet in the end it has remained difficult for Japanese society as a whole to articulate, discuss, and so come to terms with the complex feelings involved in those years of war, then defeat.[2] Given this situation, it is not surprising that even fifty years later relatively little has been done to understand and evaluate the works of Japanese artists during this difficult time.

In the environment of the early postwar years, the future for the rebirth of an authentic and contemporary *Nihonga* seemed bleak. The postwar resuscitation of the form, therefore, stands as one of the most remarkable periods in the hundred years of its history.

Notes

Unless otherwise noted, all translations are by the author.

1. Quoted in Nakamura Giichi, *Zoku Nihon kindai bijutsu ronsō-shi* (The History of Art Debates in Modern Japan, Part 2), (Tokyo: Kyūryūdō, 1982): 262–63.
2. Those interested in learning something of the depth, complexity, and ambiguity of Japanese attitudes toward the war will enjoy reading the novel by the British novelist of Japanese descent, Kazuo Ishiguro, entitled *An Artist of the Floating World*, first published in 1986. By dealing with the feelings of a painter, Ishiguro has recreated a powerful sense of the emotional tenor of those times.

7.
Postwar Developments: Absorption and Amalgamation, 1945–1968

J. Thomas Rimer

The end of the Pacific War virtually brought the arts to a halt. Kyoto was physically unharmed by the bombings, but Tokyo was reduced to rubble. Many of the painters moved to the country to avoid the destruction around them. Public spaces for the display of art had all but disappeared, and wealthy patrons, many of them industrialists, had lost their fortunes and, in some cases, their respectability.

Nevertheless, those institutions involved with the visual arts were reconstituted with amazing speed. By the fall of 1945, officials of the Ministry of Education prepared to reorganize the government-sponsored exhibition Shin-Bunten. Under the Occupation, the exhibition was again renamed as the Japan Art Exhibition (*Nihon bijutsu tenrankai*), commonly known as "Nitten." Its first exhibition was held in March of 1946, displaying a total of 134 *Nihonga* pictures, as well as 288 *yōga*. Many of the works, it has been remarked, must have been painted quietly and privately during the war. Most were on traditional themes.[1] Nitten was intended to continue the role of upholding the "traditional beauty" of the Japanese arts. In the early postwar period, these exhibitions did provide an opportunity for the display of important works by such respected *Nihonga* artists as Kaburaki Kiyokata, Itō Shinsui (1898–1972), and others.

The Japan Art Institute (Nihon Bijutsu-in), which still claimed Yokoyama Taikan as a distinguished member, reactivated its programs in 1946 in order to "soothe the hearts of the people, so weary from the fighting, and to introduce to those from abroad stationed here in the Occupation an opportunity to experience the essence of Japanese art," according to a Ministry of Education directive to the organization.[2] To this end, the Tokyo National Museum and other spaces were speedily repaired and reopened. Private groups also recommenced their activities with surprising speed. The Seiryū-sha of Kawabata Ryūshi, for example, held its first important exhibition in October of 1945. Ryūshi himself contributed work to the exhibition.

As Japan faced the challenges of rebuilding her culture in almost every sphere of activity, however, an ever sharper rift divided the more traditional *Nihonga* artists, many of whom had known considerable success in the prewar years, and a younger generation of painters, some of whom subscribed to an entirely new set of principles and expectations. The polarities between the traditionalism of the mainstream *Nihonga* establishment and a desire for experimentation on the part of younger *Nihonga* artists became all the more obvious. Pressures for reform, both from *Nihonga* and *yōga* painters, were so great that in 1958, Nitten was reconstituted as a private entity. This was the most important change since the government-sponsored exhibition was first instituted as Bunten in 1907.

A cultural map of the range of *Nihonga* painting created in the period from the end of the war until 1968 suggests three areas of creativity. Sometimes the three stood apart from each other; sometimes they overlapped. These three involved the older generation, a relatively conventional younger generation, and a younger avant-garde.

The Older Generation

Many of the important prewar *Nihonga* artists were still alive and active in the early postwar years. Their work ensured continuities and contributed to the stability of the resuscitated national organizations. By the same token, however, their conservative views often brought them discredit, at least in the eyes of some of the public. Many people felt that the forms of visual art to which these painters subscribed had lent support and validation to the military authorities during the fifteen-year-long war period.

Among the most popular and respected painters whose careers had been closely linked to the government art organizations was Yokoyama Taikan who, nearing eighty, was still painting. His younger colleague Kobayashi Kokei, now in his early sixties, was appointed to teach at the Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music (Tokyo Geijutsu Daigaku, formerly Tokyo School of Fine Arts), and Yasuda Yukihiko, another associate of Taikan from the days of Okakura Tenshin's original Japan Art Institute, was an active painter at age 61. The kind of art these artists were producing, marked now not only as conservative but, in some eyes, politically tainted as well, could not easily call forth enthusiastic support from younger artists or members of the public.

However, other more independent artists from the prewar era showed impressive new energies. Two in particular, Kawabata Ryūshi and Maeda Seison, may be said to have achieved their respective periods of greatest creativity. Kawabata Ryūshi was sixty at the end of the war and would paint actively until his death in 1966. Just before the end of hostilities, Ryūshi abandoned the war pictures on which he had been working and left his house in Tokyo, which was destroyed in the bombing, although parts of his atelier were saved. He soon returned to the art world, however, both as a painter and as the patron spirit of his group, the Seiryū-sha, where he helped train such prominent postwar artists as Yokoyama Misao. Ryūshi's own postwar work shows an even greater flexibility and daring.

Ryūshi's subject matter during this period was chosen more and more from motifs associated with the classical past. He travelled around Japan in an effort to locate the spiritual roots of the Japanese aesthetic tradition, and produced such works as *Ama no hashidate*, 1960 (Figure 7.1), in which he portrayed the poetic amalgamation of water, sand dunes, and sea in a beautiful area northwest of Kyoto. A celebrated spot, whose name can be translated as "the floating bridge of heaven," it was a subject for art at least as far back as the celebrated ink paintings of Sesshū (1420–1506). In linking himself to these great traditions, Ryūshi created one of his most striking masterpieces. But, since his composition concentrates on the sand dunes rather than a panoramic view of the mountains behind, an element so important in traditional treatments of this landscape, his view is a striking one.

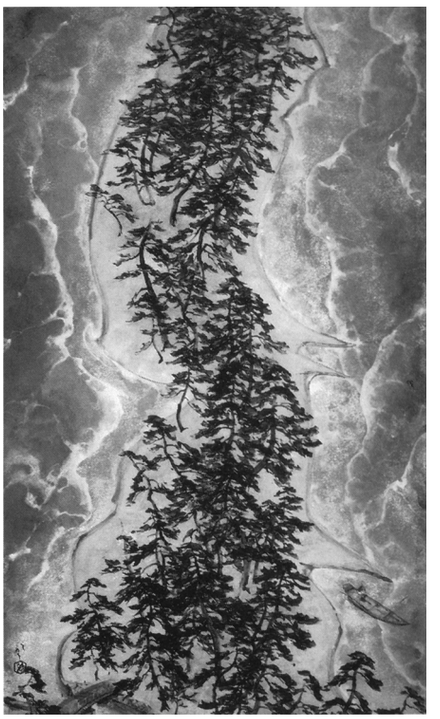


Figure 7.1
Kawabata Ryūshi, 1885–1966. *Ama no hashidate* (Tenkyō zu), 1960. Framed: color on paper; 242.4× 151.5 cm. The National Theatre, Tokyo.

Two of Ryūshi's most successful series of works created during this period resulted from lengthy pilgrimages he made. The first of them began in 1950 with a series of visits to the 88 Buddhist temples on the large island of Shikoku, that part of Japan that lies south of the Osaka-Kobe area. These visits produced a series of remarkably fresh and arresting views of the Japanese countryside, sights which, the artist later wrote, he had never before witnessed. One of these is his *Shikoku Pilgrimage: Twenty-Eighth Stop, Dainichiji Temple on Mount Hōkai*, 1951 (Plate 124a).

In the following year, Ryūshi began a series of trips to follow in the path of the famous *haiku* poet Matsuo Bashō (1644–1694), whose 1689 trip to the north of Japan was immortalized in his poetic diary, *The Narrow Road to the Deep North* (Oku no hosomichi), one of the greatest classics of Japanese literature and culture. Ryūshi wrote about his retracing of Bashō's poetic pilgrimage:

> I went in the same seasons, pursued the same itinerary, saw the same sights of nature that he would have seen, the same products of each region, the same historical relics, and I felt the same human sympathies. With this as my object, I was happy in attempting my sketches, which I used as material for later finished works.[3]

Both *Dream*, 1951 (Plate 64) and *Yōmei Gate*, 1955 (Figure 7.2) illustrate Ryūshi's response to these travels.

The need to seek out clean roots in Japan's cultural past seems to have driven many artists and writers who had attained their first artistic maturity in the interwar years. Such a "nostalgia for origins" seems symptomatic of the spiritual battles being fought by a mature generation of artists, writers, and intellectuals who were facing the shocking changes of the early postwar period.

Maeda Seison revealed a new vitality in his postwar work that continued until shortly before his death in 1977. Seison was appointed to teach at the Tokyo Na-

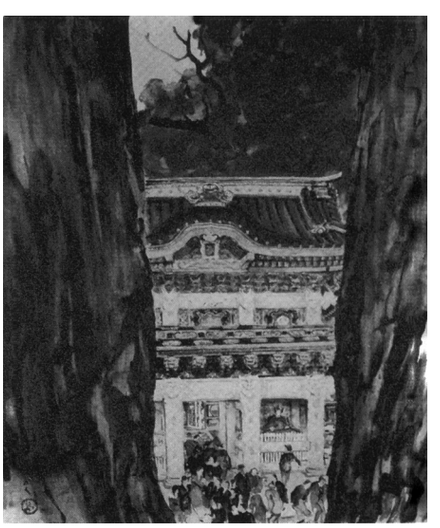


Figure 7.2
Kawabata Ryūshi, 1885–1966. *Yōmei Gate* (Yōmeimon), 1955. Framed: color on paper; 104×85 cm. Ryūshi Memorial Art Museum of Ōta-ku, Tokyo.

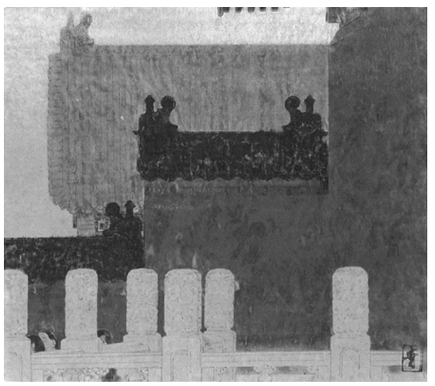


Figure 7.3
Maeda Saison, 1885–1977. *Red Wall: The Altar of Heaven* (Akai kabe: Tendan), 1960. Panel: color on paper; 64.5×74.5 cm. Private collection.

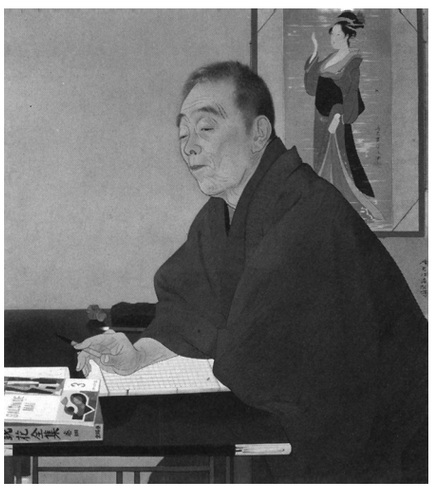


Figure 7.4
Itō Shinsui, 1898–1972. *My Teacher Kiyokata* (Kiyokata sensei), 1951. Hanging scroll: color on paper; 101× 89.5 cm. The National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo.



Figure 7.5
Hashimoto Meij, 1904–1991. *The Kabuki Actor Utaemon VI* (Rokusei Utaemon), 1955. Framed: color on paper; 141.6×111.6 cm. The National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo.

tional University of Fine Arts and Music in 1951, where he served for eight years, bringing by all accounts a fresh spirit to the academic courses offered in the techniques of *Nihonga*. Seison, like Ryūshi, also returned to important sites of traditional Japanese culture. He visited the ancient capital of Nara, where he witnessed the annual March "water drawing ceremonies," dating back to the eighth century, at the famous Nigatsudō or "Second Month Temple" that sits on a beautiful site on the hills overlooking the city. This encounter produced a striking series of works, among them *Water Drawing Ceremony*, 1959 (Plate 63). Seison travelled to China as well, as part of a diplomatic attempt to reopen relations between Japan and her former enemy in 1960. The artist's visit produced a number of important paintings, especially *Red Wall: The Altar of Heaven* (Figure 7.3).

A Younger Traditional Generation

By the end of the Occupation in 1952, Japan had begun to regain a certain financial stability. More people were becoming interested in the arts, both as an avenue of personal cultivation and as a means to measure the meaning and significance of Japanese culture in a new and peaceful context.

Attendance swelled at local and national exhibitions, and books and magazines dedicated to the visual arts proliferated. However, in the area of *Nihonga*, a greater interest in the visual arts did not produce an increased openness to advanced styles of art. The public at large, which had not experienced, accepted, or internalized the kind of visual shock registered by viewers in the West when faced with the work of Matisse, Picasso, Fauvists, Cubists, and Surrealists, remained quite content to enjoy styles of painting that seemed old-fashioned by the postwar period. The Nitten exhibitions provided privileged space for such works. Many relatively conservative artists, some of them extremely accomplished, had no wish to move into the avant-garde. Rather, they preferred to create painting redolent, as they saw it, with the kind of authentic, traditional Japanese beauty that had long been the ideal for the *Nihonga* movement.

Portrait painting continued as an important genre in the postwar period. No painter at this time was more gifted than Itō Shinsui (1898–1972). Shinsui's paintings of beautiful women, his wood-block prints, and his skillful portraits were regarded highly during his lifetime and after. In a portrait of his teacher Kaburaki Kiyokata (Figure 7.4), Shinsui places on the master's table a volume of writings by Izumi Kyōka (1873–1939), Kiyokata's favorite author for whom he often provided colorful and adept illustrations (Plate 136).

Another postwar painter noted for his portraits, Hashimoto Meiji (1904–1991), studied with Matsuoka Eikyū at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts (Tokyo Bijutsu Gakkō). His portrait of the Kabuki actor Nakamura Utaemon VI (b.1917) shows his strong sense of line, for which he became celebrated (Figure 7.5). His articulated use of pattern and flat surfaces creates a composition in which background and figure exhibit a close reciprocal relationship.

The Kyoto painter Uda Tekison (1896–1980), who studied with Kikuchi Keigetsu, was known for his evocative paintings of traditional Kyoto scenes. His 1957 painting of the magnificent Kiyomizudera temple in the eastern hills of Kyoto (Figure 7.6) provides a typical example of meticulous craftsmanship combined with a poetic sensibility. Another student of Matsuoka Eikyū, Yamaguchi Hōshun (1893–1971), was active in the Nitten exhibitions in the early postwar period. Many of his still-life paintings, with their attractive colors and charming subject matter, such as his *Flowers on the Chair*, 1949 (Figure 7.7), owe much in their flat treatment of space and poised design to traditional *Nihonga* techniques.

There is also a middle group of postwar *Nihonga* artists, more experimental in technique, and often more probing in conception than the conservative artists mentioned above. Perhaps it is not surprising that, for the general public, such painters remain among the most generally popular of postwar *Nihonga* painters. Higashiyama Kaii's *Road*, 1950 (Plate 153) and Takayama Tatsuo's *Hilltop*, 1957 (Plate 158) use scenes from nature as their subject matter, but move beyond specific details to a kind of stylized simplification that lends a certain monumentality to

their efforts. Hirayama Ikuo, in his *Establishing the Diamond Mind*, 1963 (Plate 170) applies some of the same techniques to his deep and consistent interest in religious subject matter. Sugiyama Yasushi, in his 1960 composition *Heat* (Plate 159), moves even closer to the abstraction that was already so central to the emerging avant-garde.

The level of skill shown by these artists is high, and their work, as well as that of many others of their generation, has earned them appreciative audiences among those interested in *Nihonga*. Their work can, on its own terms, be aesthetically satisfying, often evocative. For them, altogether breaking open the parameters of *Nihonga* was never a strong imperative. Much of the younger generation, however, took a different view.



Figure 7.6
Uda Tekison, 1896–1980. *Kiyomizudera Temple* (Kiyomizudera), 1957. Framed: color on paper; 90× 120 cm. Kyoto Municipal Museum of Art.



Figure 7.7
Yamaguchi Hōshun, 1893–1971. *Flowers on the Chair* (Tōjō no hana), 1949. Framed: color on paper; 112×73 cm. The National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo.

The Avant-Garde Generation

For most younger artists (and for at least some of the public interested in art), *Nihonga* was now viewed with chagrin if not with outright suspicion. In the eyes of these younger artists and critics, the traditional art forms offered no suitable techniques that would permit the urgent realities of contemporary life to be reflected. They set out, indeed, to attack the traditional values that seemed to be intertwined with the politics and policies of the wartime period. For them, postwar Japanese culture needed a new basis for creation, a renewed spirit altogether. Kawabata Ryūshi and Maeda Seison attempted to return to the more distant cultural past and thereby seek out sources of authenticity in Japanese culture. But these younger artists were sure they could no longer retrace those steps. The realities of contemporary life, for painters attempting to eke out a living in the urban ruins, now seemed at a far remove from what was increasingly perceived as an aristocratic, decorative, and irrelevant form of painting aimed not at the present but looking toward the sometimes dubious values of the past.

The younger generation of painters was arriving at the conclusion that Japanese perceptions of reality were now substantially Westernized. The *Nihonga* painter Takayama Tatsuo, in his thirties at the end of the war, later articulated with eloquence the sense of virtual schizophrenia felt by the artists of his generation.

> When I thought of the situation brought about in Japan because of our defeat in the war, I felt very strongly that the path taken so long by *Nihonga* can only collide with the lives we live now. For example, when I went into an exhibition of *Nihonga*, then came back out on the street, I felt within myself that sense of collision, and a sense of deep gloom.[4]

For such painters as these, it was imperative that new points of contact with contemporary life be sought, then strengthened.

In the earlier postwar period, the younger artists felt a new burst of idealism as well as a need to put themselves back in touch with a larger artistic world. For all practical purposes, they had been cut off since the mid-1930s from any chance to participate in or even observe the newer developments in European and American art. In that regard, they felt the same urges that propelled the *yōga* painters of the same generation. Given the relative poverty of the country after the war, however, travel to Europe and the United States was prohibitively expensive and restricted by the government so as not to exhaust precious foreign currency reserves. Relatively few artists before 1968 were able to make the kind of trips that some artists had made in the 1920s and 1930s. Books and materials were more widely available, however, and exhibitions of foreign art, from retrospectives of Matisse and Picasso to the contemporary art of France and the United States, helped fill the gap. One way or another, these artists were anxious to abandon what some had termed "a dangerous Japanese provincialism."

These enthusiasms produced organizations of younger painters that in the early postwar years helped sustain them spiritually and provided them with useful venues for the exhibition of their works. Two of these organizations, established during the American Occupation, were to prove of lasting significance in the development of postwar *Nihonga*. The Creative Art (Sōzō Bijutsu) group, founded

in 1948, included *Nihonga* artists from both the Tokyo and Kyoto areas, among them two painters represented in the present exhibition, Yamamoto Kyūjin and Fukuda Toyoshirō. In the manifesto for the group, the artists declared themselves allied to "a creativeness in *Nihonga* which will be based on a spirit of an authentic internationalism." The fervor of the group can be sensed in the tone of Toyoshirō's remarks during that turbulent period.

> I am sick and tired of the emptiness of the pictures that have been painted up until now. We may speak of "the spirit of tradition," or "the special characteristics of our national character," but if there is no real proof of such things in actual reality, then they have no meaning whatsoever. If artists who possess a real intensity do not press forward, there can never be a birth of a new art.... The kind of spirit we imagine involves no yearning for an invisible past or something metaphysical; rather, we must work tirelessly for the diffusion of a truly contemporary human spirit. This is a spirit that has been forced to achieve the automobile, the airplane, the atomic age itself. It is our own contemporary spirit.[5]

Also in 1948, young *Nihonga* artists in Kyoto formed the Panreal Art Association (Panriaru Bijutsu Kyōkai), an even more radical group. Their manifesto stressed the need to "forget the small-room mentality" of the traditional *Nihonga* painters; a truly contemporary creative intelligence must be used in order to observe society "with burning eyes." Along with the need to manifest a fresh point of view, they called for the need to break down the master-disciple guildlike structures that had sustained *Nihonga* in order to "give birth to a truly free art." Mikami Makoto, whose *Work 64, 5* (Plate 168) is included in this exhibition, was a founding member of the group.

Although these organizations did not, in and of themselves, replace the structures that still governed the public world of *Nihonga*, they did force some changes. Many of the young painters who joined the Creative Art group had been associated in one fashion or another with the Nitten exhibition system. By 1958, just a decade later, many artists and critics considered the Nitten sufficiently improved and "democratized" when it was reorganized under private sponsorship, and it became possible for much more heterodox forms of painting to be displayed. In a real sense, these small, forward-looking groups had affected the status quo.

Looking from a broad perspective on the painting from the end of the war through 1968, it would seem that much of the enduring work can best be understood in terms of an urge on the part of many painters to integrate into the specific form of *Nihonga* a larger vision encompassing tendencies in world art of the period. Within this general framework, two responses can be identified. The first concerns the attempt by many painters to absorb in a creative way the insights of modern Western masters into their postwar art. Many postwar artists studied (more often than not from reproductions) with new appreciation and intensity the work of the modern European masters, such as Matisse, Picasso, and Cézanne, as well as Bonnard, Rousseau, and other famous artists. These painters had inspired the work of the *yōga* painters decades before; now they were to influence the realm of *Nihonga* as well. In one sense, these postwar artists were continuing with the same kind of experiments undertaken by the more progressive interwar *Nihonga* painters, who had gone abroad themselves to find enlightenment and inspiration in the work of European artists. However, what had been for the earlier generation an adventure was for these postwar artists a virtual necessity.

A second and related response involved the development of an interest in international contemporary art. This impetus, however, came from a new direction and produced a genuinely new and artistically effective channel for authentic development: it had to do with the potentials of abstraction. European abstract art, in the work of such prewar masters as Mondrian, was known to some extent in Japan during the interwar years. In *Nihonga*, a tendency to exploit the use of abstraction for decorative purposes can be seen in certain prewar and postwar works of Fukuda Heihachirō, such as *Ripples*, 1932 (Plate 120) and *Rain*, 1953 (Plate 154). However, the great impetus of European abstract art came to Japan, and

eventually to the *Nihonga* artists themselves, in the 1950s and early 1960s, notably through the powerful influence of Art Informel and its chief advocate, Michel Tapié (1909–1987). The American Abstract Expressionists also influenced postwar Japanese art, but at a slightly later period, probably first through Tapié's own interest in the work of such artists as Sam Francis, Jackson Pollock, and Mark Tobey.

Given the admiration the Japanese had held for French art since the nineteenth century, it is not surprising that in the postwar period they would come to seek an understanding of contemporary art through the medium of France and French contemporary culture. So it became Tapié who first brought these ideas of abstract art before the younger postwar artists; and although he was to have the greatest influence in *yōga*, his appreciation of the work of certain *Nihonga* artists, notably Dōmoto Inshō, attracted many *Nihonga* painters to his ideas as well.

Tapié came to his enthusiasms through a route related culturally to certain political issues that, interestingly enough, concerned both postwar French and Japanese artists alike. Dismayed by the problems of the war and the collaboration of some French with the Germans, Tapié and his colleagues found the status quo of French culture both suspicious and artistically bankrupt. He looked at the recent past in France in much the same way that many postwar Japanese painters regarded their country's activities in the Pacific War. To clear the slate, then, Tapié wrote in 1952, all art must be done away with in which "all the classical criteria were still in play."[6] As a way out of such an impasse, Tapié and his colleagues vowed to work for an art which must, in his words, "be charged with the most dynamic, dionysiac power, a kind of living matter in a permanent state of magical ferment."[7]

Two conditions were necessary to achieve such a pure and authentically new art, so that it might be separated from its decadent predecessors. The first required that the artist have the courage to maintain a true individualism. Such a call for individual action was very much in consonance with the ideals proposed by the Creative Art group and the Panreal Art Association; indeed, Tapié's impatience with the artistic situation in France paralleled closely Toyoshirō's observations on early postwar Japan. It is little wonder that the impact of Tapié became so important to the Japanese art world, since progressive figures in France and Japan alike were seeking a way out of what they felt was a compromised past.

Tapié began his visits to Japan as early as 1957. In 1962 he wrote, in conjunction with the Japanese cultural historian Haga Tōru, the first important European art book dedicated to avant-garde Japanese art, which included discussions of both *yōga* and *Nihonga* artists. In particular, Tapié praised the use of abstraction which, for him, constituted a central element in the traditions of Japanese art.

> To begin with, the Oriental is far ahead of us in the practice of *abstraction* in general, both in his philosophy and in the "reading" of his art.... The Oriental has the advantage of being familiar with certain essential means of artistic expression which the Occidental arts are assimilating so little, so slowly, with an unconsciousness which is often less than elementary—I am referring to lyrical graphism and qualitative space.[8]

The effect of Tapié's attitudes on the work of the Japanese avant-garde was profound. It represented both a call for Japan to enter the international postwar art scene, and a challenge for Japanese artists to re-evaluate their own traditions.

The point has often been made that by the 1880s and after, many Japanese artists beginning to study *yōga* felt a natural attraction to Impressionist and Post-Impressionist painting in France. Doubtless the reason that this elegant and decorative French art found in them ready sympathies was because the work of Manet, Monet, Van Gogh, and others in turn owed something to their enthusiasm for traditional Japanese art. Japanese painters, because of their own heritage, were already familiar, at least implicitly, with the aesthetic principles of their own traditions. In looking at such French painting, therefore, Japanese artists found not only something new, but to their delight they found something that they could recognize as well, consciously or unconsciously.

It seems apparent that another variation within the same process was at work in

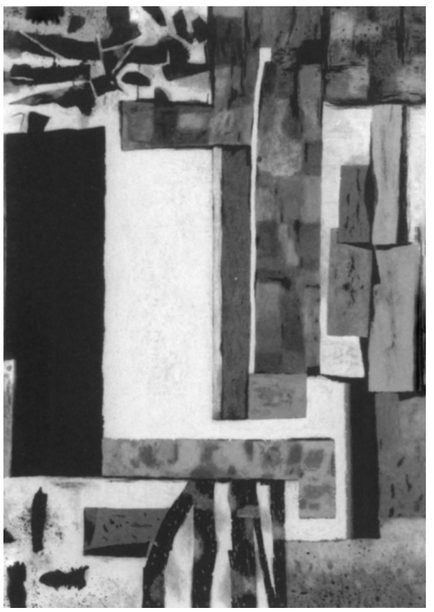


Figure 7.8
Dōmoto Inshō, 1891–1975. *Perfect Freedom* (Muge), 1958. Framed: color on paper; 160×130 cm. Kyoto Municipal Museum of Art.

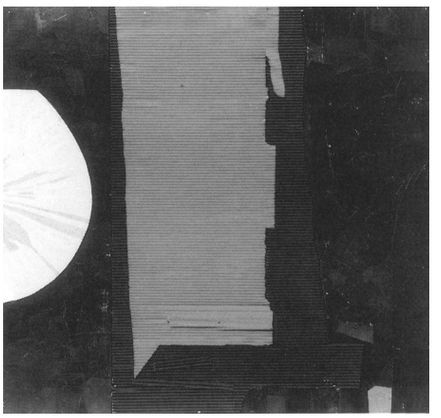


Figure 7.9
Mikami Makoto, 1919–1972. *Temple* (Jiin), 1962. Paper, corrugated cardboard, pigment; 117.4×123.5 cm. Izumi Gallery.

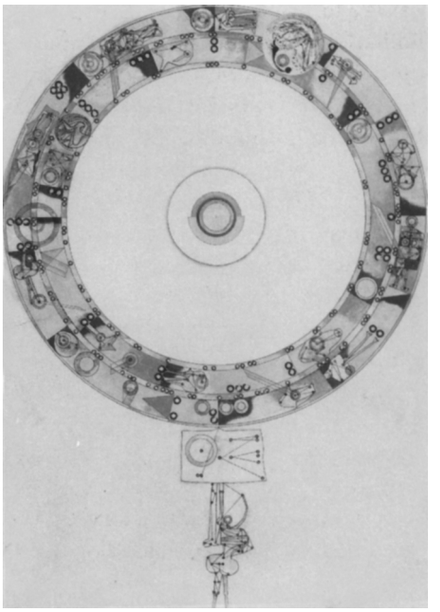


Figure 7.10
Mikami Makoto, 1919–1972. *Kaleidoscopic Sutra Map of Pressure Points* (Keiraku mangekyō), 1967. Framed: color on paper; 130×91.5 cm. Aichi Prefectural Museum of Art.

the postwar period. French artists moved to abstraction at least in part, if Tapié is to be believed, as a means to put down their own realistic tradition. The *Nihonga* artists, now that certain elements in their own tradition had been sanctified by a highly respected contemporary French observer (and one with the right avant-garde credentials), could look again at the past classical tradition with new eyes.

The technique of abstraction as a means to break out of what many younger *Nihonga* painters felt to be the empty "decorative lyricism" of the past could be put to many uses, and its influences can be seen in many of the most vital works in postwar art. The "limitless void of space" favored in traditional ink painting was revived, and the muddling of colors together to render ambiguous the sense of space; collage; and the simplifications and deformations of natural shapes to break down common-sense perspectives were employed. Some of these techniques can be seen in the works of Iwahashi Eien, such as *Wall*, 1955 (Plate 162). Artists also experimented with incorporating new materials directly into their work in order to give the painting surface itself a tactile, dimensional texture.

It is not surprising that Michel Tapié appreciated the work of the *Nihonga* painter Dōmoto Inshō, since by the time the French artist arrived in Japan, Inshō was already experimenting successfully with abstract elements, as in his well-known *Perfect Freedom*, 1958 (Figure 7.8). Mikami Makoto's *Work 64, 5* (Plate 168) includes among its materials wood and cork, and exists in a universe that on first glance seems virtually removed from the earlier traditions of *Nihonga*. Repeated viewing of this and other of Mikami's works, such as *Temple*, 1952 (Figure 7.9) or *Kaleidoscopic Sutra Map of Pressure Points*, 1967 (Figure 7.10), however, reveal important connections of craft, skill in design, and color that may comfortably link such works with their more traditional predecessors.

Another well-respected Kyoto *Nihonga* painter who used abstraction is Iwata Shigeyoshi (b.1935). Like Mikami, he also uses various natural materials in his paintings. His 1960 *Work* (Figure 7.11) includes wood and hemp. Nomura Kō (1927–1991), a member of the Panreal Art Association, mixed textures and shapes in his *Fragment No. 5* (Figure 7.12) in order to create virtual *trompe l'œil* effects. Shimomura Ryōnosuke, in *Bird Acalanātha*, 1965 (Plate 169), has been able to create three-dimensional effects through the use of paper mixed with pigments.

Finally, the work of two artists, both highly regarded in Japan, constitutes the centerpiece of the last section of the exhibition. Both are strong individualists, in

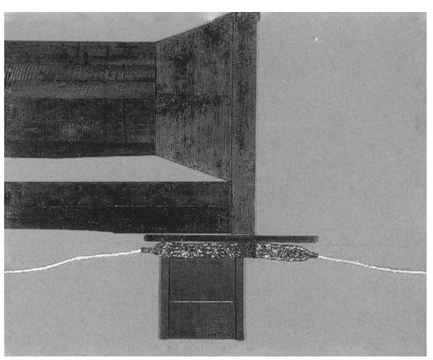


Figure 7.11
Iwata Shigeyoshi, b.1935. *Work*, 1963. Framed: oil, canvas, board, cloth; 130×162 cm.

Tapié's terms, and in both cases, their work transcends the artistic and cultural limitations that continued to be imposed by the established *Nihonga* circles of the time. Yokoyama Misao, born in 1920 and already dead in 1973, was always, some might say, an outsider. Born in the relatively remote northern prefecture of Niigata, Yokoyama is doubtless the most important painter affiliated with the Seiryū-sha group led by Kawabata Ryūshi, perhaps the most independent-minded of the interwar *Nihonga* painters. Yokoyama was drafted into the Japanese army and spent his war years in China; captured and sent by the Soviets to Siberia, he did not return to Japan until 1950, when he was already thirty. By 1956, he had created such a strong and assured work as his *River* (Plate 165).

Yokoyama's powerful creations soon won him awards, and he was able to make a trip to the United States in 1961. *Wall Street*, 1962 (Plate 166) provides a striking evocation of that visit. His works grew more creative and stronger, although he found his energies much diminished after severe heart trouble in 1966. Yokoyama chose for his subjects the visual realities of the contemporary world. No birds and flowers, no delicate evocations of nature or lovely women here: rather we are shown a blast furnace, a factory. In scale and treatment alike, his works reveal an epic quality, even those based on his growing interest in the use of ink in scenes inspired by classical Chinese precedents, such as *Eight Views of the Xiao and Xiang Rivers*, 1963 (Plate 167).

Yokoyama was typical of his time in pursuing the ideal, first learned from his mentor Ryūshi, of seeking to interest a large and diverse public in the art of *Nihonga*. In his best work, Yokoyama embodies the force and independence of mind sought by certain younger *Nihonga* artists of the postwar period. His independence was purchased at a price, however; never a friend of the world of the salon, he was reputed to have faced financial difficulties and sometimes created inferior art of a commercial sort merely to support himself. But in his forceful, often abstract forms, he showed the power that *Nihonga* could still possess.

Because of his health problems, Yokoyama's career was already coming to an end in 1968, the year the second of these two enormously gifted postwar painters, Kayama Matazō, painted his evocative screen entitled *Star Festival* (Plate 171). Kayama is still an active painter, and his continuing quest for fresh forms of expression within the parameters of *Nihonga* has taken him into new strategies of expression, and to the techniques of ink painting in particular, as his *Waves in the Moonlight*, 1979 (Figure 7.13) makes evident. Given his prodigious output, it is still too early to evaluate the ultimate significance and influence of his career; yet even by 1968, when he was little more than forty, Kayama was already considered one of the most gifted artists in Japan. Nor, perhaps, is it surprising that Kayama was a good friend of Yokoyama Misao. At one difficult point in Yokoyama's career, Kayama



Figure 7.12
Nomura Kō, 1927–1991. *Fragment No. 5* (Danpen No. 5), 1960. Board, slate, cement; 185.5×124.5 cm. Kyoto Municipal Museum of Art.

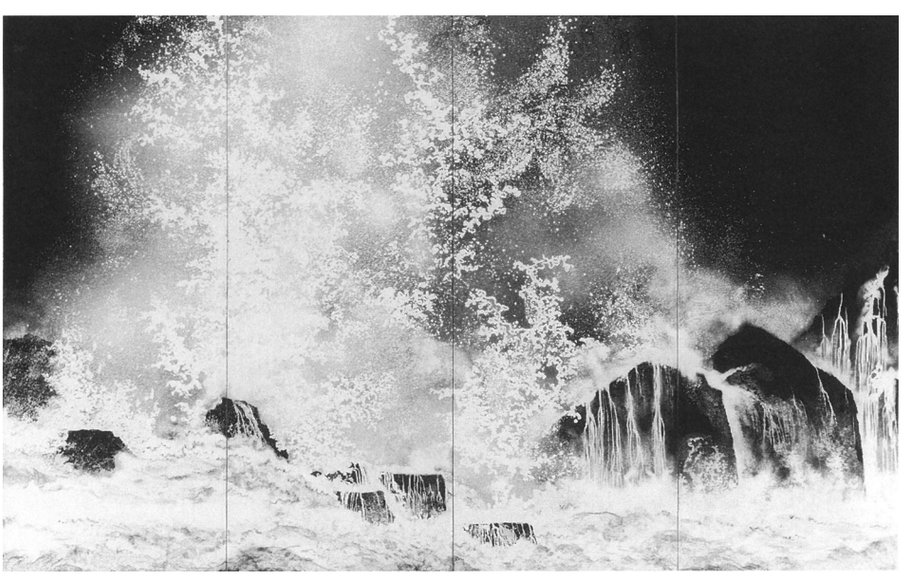


Figure 7.13
Kayama Matazō, b.1927. *Waves in the Moonlight* (Gekkō hatō), 1979. Four-panel screen: ink on paper; 162×261 cm. Private collection.

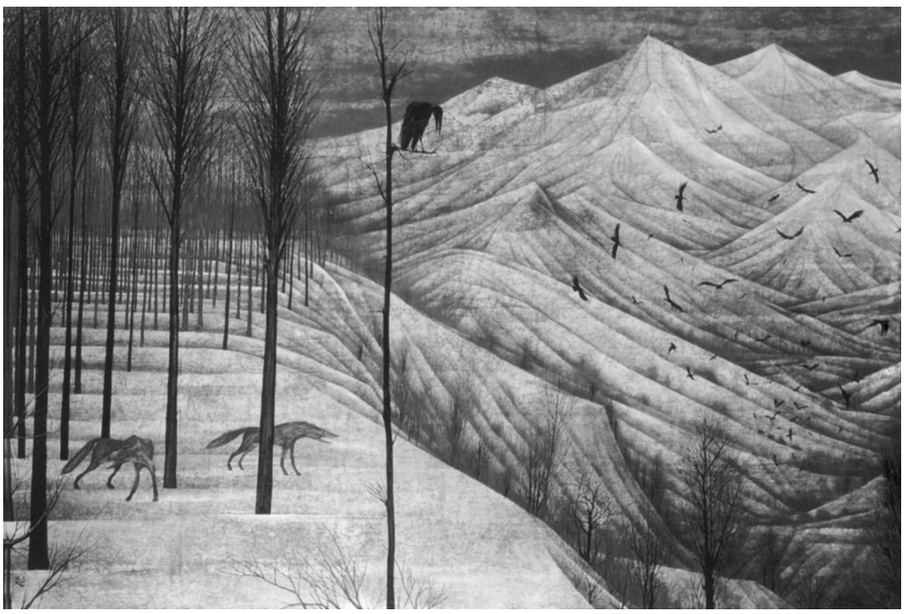


Figure 7.14
Kayama Matazō, b.1927. *Winter* (Fuyu), 1957. Framed: color on paper; 128.5×192 cm. The National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo.

helped the older artist find an important teaching job.

Unlike Yokoyama, who began his study of art after an upbringing in the provinces, Kayama was born in Kyoto, the son of a Nishijin clothing designer and the grandson of a Kyoto Kanō school painter. His aesthetic credentials are impeccable. Kayama went to Tokyo to study *Nihonga* at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts and, like Yokoyama, had his studies interrupted by the war. He was able to return to his classes in 1946, however, and graduated in 1949. Aware of the activities of the Creative Art group, Kayama decided to study with one of its founders, the dynamic painter Yamamoto Kyūjin. Kayama became a full member of the group (by this time now merged with yet another organization) in 1959.

Kayama's early work soon attracted wide attention. His sources were eclectic, his technique sophisticated, his self-confidence apparent. Concerning his well-known painting *Winter*, 1957 (Figure 7.14), for example, the painter remarked that "I have always been fond of winter landscape, and here I tried to capture the effect of the cold and clear winter atmosphere. At the time I was very much taken with the work of Bruegel. I began by painting a larger group of wolves in the lower left-hand corner, but I remained unsatisfied with the result, so I went to a great deal of trouble in order to remove three or four of them."[9]

Kayama's interest in the classical arts, perhaps fueled by his upbringing in Kyoto, focused in the late 1950s and 1960s on new techniques borrowed from Rinpa, which can be observed in *Star Festival*. These abstracting and decorative tendencies marked many of the works he created before 1968. He defined his use of this stylization in terms of its decorative possibilities that "enable the artist to thoroughly sublimate the subject matter" in order to seek out a still deeper essence. Kayama has been a prolific artist and a highly successful one. His travels around the world have provided him with new subject matter, and he has sometimes represented the Japanese government in official art exchanges. An official trip to China in 1987 produced his renderings of some of China's most famous sites.

The art of these two independent spirits, Kayama and Yokoyama, reveals little in the way of quickly visible congruences in style or subject matter. Yokoyama's brush is broad, sometimes purposefully crude, while Kayama reveals a consistent delicacy of touch that speaks for a finely tuned sense of craftsmanship closer to the traditional *Nihonga* sensibilities. Yokoyama uses dramatic flat surfaces, enhanced by the power of color; Kayama often shows himself a master of line. Nevertheless, both use the power and suggestiveness of abstraction in ways that mark them as exemplars for the fresh experimentation which marks the years 1945–1968. In many ways, they define the new range of possibilities for postwar *Nihonga*, the latest

flowering in a tradition now over a century old.

After 1968

It is difficult to characterize the twenty-odd years of *Nihonga* painting which have followed the hundred years encompassed in this study. As yet, no overview of the recent period has been attempted by Japanese writers and critics and, in the forest of journalistic writing on this body of recent work, it would be disingenuous for a foreign observer to suggest that any consistent body of opinion has emerged. Such established painters as Kayama Matazō continue on, and there are, of course, younger talents in the field. Still, one cannot help escape the conclusion that, in the larger trajectories of modern Japanese art, *Nihonga*, like conventional *yōga*, now occupies a more modest place than previously in terms of significant creativity.

This situation doubtless has arisen at least in part because contemporary Japanese art plays a role in the art of the world. Japanese artists, like their American and European counterparts, show their work abroad, often live abroad for extended periods. They find their colleagues and develop their enthusiasms in a world context. Perhaps, therefore, it is inevitable that *Nihonga* will play a less significant role in contemporary Japan. The classical traditions to which the movement has always paid homage have by now been amalgamated into the work of not only such celebrated Japanese oil painters as Okada Kenzō (1902–1982), but of Western artists too, from Mark Tobey and Franz Kline down to the present. In that sense at least, one mission of *Nihonga* has been accomplished.

Finally, it should be remarked that Japanese *yōga* painters whose ideals remain wedded to a representational style face similar issues. Like the *Nihonga* painters, they continue to create works which please a specific and often wealthy segment of the public, just as do more conventional painters in every country. And indeed, as recent exhibitions in Japan have made clear, the differences in subject matter, style, and aesthetic aim between contemporary *Nihonga* and *yōga* have shrunk considerably. By the 1990s, it has indeed become possible to define *Nihonga*, as many contemporary Japanese-language dictionaries do, simply in terms of the traditionally Japanese materials (pigments, brushes, etc.) used to create works of art. The split of aesthetic values between East and West that began in 1868 now seems well on the way to being resolved.

Notes

Unless otherwise noted, all translations are by the author.

1. See Kawakita Michiaki and Takashina Shūji, *Kindai Nihon kaiga shi* (Tokyo: Chūō Kōron-sha, 1979). Dealing with all aspects of modern Japanese art, this book provides an invaluable summary of many trends and events in the art world of the entire modern period.
2. Quoted in Takeda Michitarō, *Zoku Nihon Bijutsu-in-shi* (The History of the Japan Art Institute, 2), (Tokyo: Chūō Kōron-sha, 1967): 2.
3. Quoted in *Kawabata Ryūshi: Ryūshi to Seiryū-sha* (Ryūshi and Seiryū-sha), *Kindai no bijutsu* (Modern Art), vol. 34 (May 1976): 69.
4. Quoted in Iwasaki Yoshikazu, "Gendai bijutsu to shite no Nihonga" (*Nihonga* As Contemporary Art) in *Gendai Nihonga ten* (Contemporary Nihonga Exhibition), exh. cat. (Tokyo: Nihon Keizei Shinbun-sha, 1990): n.p.
5. Quoted in Iwasaki Yoshikazu, "Shōwa Nihonga no zentai-zō" (The Overview of Shōwa *Nihonga*) in *Shōwa no Nihonga 100-sen* (100 Selected *Nihonga* Paintings of the Shōwa Era), (Tokyo: Asahi Shinbun-sha, 1991): 233.
6. Michel Tapié, *Un art autre* (Paris: Giraud, 1952); trans. in Charles Harrison and Paul Wood, eds., *Art in Theory, 1900–1990* (Cambridge, Mass.: Blackwell, 1992): 620.
7. Quoted in *Paris Post War: Art and Existentialism, 1945–55*, exh. cat. (London: The Tate Gallery, 1993): 212.
8. Michel Tapié and Haga Tōru, *Avant-Garde Art in Japan* (New York: Abrams, 1962), n.p.
9. Quoted in "Shuppin mokuroku" (Catalogue) in *Kayama Matazō*, exh. cat. (Nagoya: Chūnichi Shinbun-sha, 1992): 101.

8.
Some Final Observations

J. Thomas Rimer

This survey of a hundred years of *Nihonga* can only begin to suggest the aesthetic, political, and social aspects of this important movement in modern Japanese art. The account has been arranged as a history because, however unique or self-contained the work of some of these individual artists may appear to be, the paintings they created and the attitudes they held toward their own accomplishments and their place in society remain intimately connected to the overwhelming social and political changes that occurred in Japanese society during these hundred years.

The details of those connections—the formation of artistic groups and institutions; the shifting relationships between politics, bureaucracy, and the work of individual artists; and the introduction of new ideas from Western art—are, of course, of great interest in and of themselves. Much about the trajectory of this experience reveals a pattern which is doubtless applicable to other cultures, particularly during that period in the nineteenth and earlier twentieth centuries when Americans borrowed so much, in technique and ideals alike, from European art. In the space available here, however, it has only been possible to skim the surface of these complex interrelationships and their consequences. It is our hope, at least, that we have raised some of the more important questions that might be posed concerning the shifting significance of *Nihonga* in a modernizing Japan.

Looking at this hundred years of activity, there are several larger issues involved which merit some comment. These are offered not in terms of positing any precise conclusions, but rather as a means to suggest further meditation on the nature and function of the visual arts in a dynamic modern society.

A Sense of Closure

One issue concerns that of closure. As the visual evidence indicates, in 1868 the art that would by the turn of the century be referred to as *Nihonga* represented the response from artists trained in the nineteenth century to their own classical tradition. By 1964, when a painting like *Work 64, 5* of Mikami Makoto (Plate 168) was created and accepted as part of the tradition, the art of *Nihonga* was beginning to merge with world currents of postwar art. Developments within *Nihonga* in the last 25-odd years suggest that, at least for the more adventuresome artists, the tendency to amalgamation continues. Can it really be said, then, that the history of *Nihonga* as a dynamic force in modern Japanese artistic culture is now more or less complete? Can future painters in the *Nihonga* tradition offer nothing more to contemporary Japanese art than skillful technique?

A visual chronology of the works in the present exhibition provides a reflection of the mental structures through which the Japanese have perceived themselves and their society. Those structures have become increasingly Westernized; and indeed, the values of society shifted and moved at a speed more rapid than any adjustments to the aesthetic values held by these painters could accommodate.

During this period of a hundred years, most Japanese *yōga* painters went directly to European models for their techniques and their inspirations. As this exhibition reveals, however, *Nihonga* painters eventually did the same, even if in a more refracted fashion. Cézanne, Gauguin, then, after the war, Dubuffet and Picasso in his later phases may have served as the spiritual heroes of the *yōga* artists, but the works of these major European painters were eventually studied and scrutinized just as carefully by the *Nihonga* painters. Amalgamating such an alien artistic vocabulary, and so quickly, into the Japanese tradition has added a certain intuitive flavor of struggle, and occasionally of awkward compromise, to the work of many *Nihonga* artists. This synthesis was by no means an easy one to achieve. Nevertheless, by the 1970s and after, that amalgamation seemed close to completion.

The Role of Society and Individual Creativity

Whatever their personal predilections, artists do not, cannot, function altogether outside their times. And if their work is to be known and appreciated by others, they must depend on some system of support. For the art of *Nihonga*, the burden of government patronage, which often was seen as one means to establish some form of "national art," now seems in retrospect to have been a heavy one to bear.

In many ways, the social and political systems in which the works of these individual artists have been imbedded have sometimes risked blunting or deflecting the creative potential of many gifted painters. Some Japanese observers feel that the maintenance of these traditional systems and attitudes into the final years of this century has in balance been harmful. The well-known art and cultural critic Haryū Ichirō, writing in 1994, stated this position in sharp relief.

> What has sustained the concept of *Nihonga* down to the present day is the patronage of important and powerful people, wealthy public figures, and fashionable families, as well as the market itself, which is manipulated using much larger amounts of money than are available for Western-style painting and sculpture, plus such elements as the teacher-student relationships of the private ateliers and other remnants of the apprentice system. All of these relate to conditions which remain outside the realm of art itself.[1]

Such traditional structures for the arts in Japanese culture have not been retained only for *Nihonga*. Many of the classical arts, in particular the tea ceremony, the teaching of calligraphy, the study of Noh singing and dancing by amateurs, and the flower arranging schools maintain some or many of these traditional structures. What sets *Nihonga* apart, however, and what constitutes its special difficulty, is the fact that the chief strategies used to keep alive these classical Japanese arts involve maintaining and preserving appropriate traditions, and occasionally allowing for certain modest innovations by acknowledged masters. In the case of *Nihonga*, however, authentic elements of newness and change had come to be anticipated by the public since roughly the middle of the Meiji period. *Nihonga* was thus challenged to be at once a traditional *and* a contemporary art. Such a balance, precarious at best, became increasingly difficult to sustain. It may be an impossible task to maintain the great traditions while at the same time attempting to reflect the actual world in which the artists, and the nation, were living.

It is worth recalling at this point that no system officially created or set up by any culture can ensure artistic excellence. Such a system may help support the careers of artists and may occasionally give them access to circles of power and prestige. Yet if their work does not find sustained, independent public interest, their reputations will eventually fade, much like the reputations of so many painters who contributed to the Paris Salon in the nineteenth century.

Art and the Essence of Being Japanese

One of the burdens placed on these artists, as the very term *Nihonga*—"Japanese" painting—suggests, is that they were somehow charged with the task of representing some element in their work which should be considered irreducibly "Japanese." The arts have long been privileged in Japan as a means of conveying national sensibilities. They have been considered precious repositories, within which can be found the core of an "authentic" national character, presumably inviolate from changes that over the centuries have in fact become inevitable. Since the beginning of the Meiji period in 1868, those alterations have been specifically characterized as having come from abroad.

In recent decades, as Japanese sensibilities and values have come to resemble those found throughout much of the contemporary world, the fear remains, even grows in some quarters, that the powerful even if somehow undefined essence of the very nationhood of Japan herself is somehow being forced to dissipate itself, and is possibly in danger of vanishing altogether. The artists working in the medium of *Nihonga* have therefore often implicitly assigned themselves the task of intuiting, and rendering visible, these elusive "basic principles" of Japanese culture.

Of what might such principles consist? The contemporary scholar of *Nihonga*, Iwasaki Yoshikazu has on the basis of his long research suggested on the *Nihonga* movement one useful point of approach.[2] For Iwasaki, the chief characteristic of Western painting and, by extension, Japanese Western-style *yōga* lies in the fact that the post-Renaissance tradition in Western art has been focused on the observation of visual realities. On the other hand, the classical Chinese and Japanese traditions have concentrated on an "essentialization," which moves beyond any surface reality in order to locate the essence, most often felt to be a metaphysical essence, of the subject being rendered. By this logic, a Western painter might show us the way a tree looks. A traditional Japanese painter would select elements in the configuration of a real tree in order to show the essence of tree-ness that perforce lies below, beyond the surface reality. Therefore, Iwasaki emphasizes, Western (and Western-style Japanese) painters concentrate on *seeing*, while *Nihonga* artists focus on *feeling*. Intuition, rather than observation, thus remains in his view the authentic central concern for painters in the *Nihonga* tradition.

The problem in our present period, Iwasaki goes on to suggest, may lie in the fact that our contemporary mentality, whether Japanese, American, or European, is increasingly shaped by scientific attitudes that privilege observation. In such a context, the kind of "essentialization" practiced by many *Nihonga* painters risks being perceived as merely an attempt to create feelings of nostalgia. So traditional a vision, in this view, cannot seem to contribute to an artistic creation that is sufficiently responsive to our modern consciousness. Even an appeal to the beauties of nature, such a central subject for *Nihonga* painters during the hundred-year period of discussion, while seemingly "apolitical," actually risks becoming in and of itself a political statement. This is simply because the appeal to nature has often been consciously adopted as a means to convey a whole complex of concepts concerning the uniqueness of Japanese culture, ranging from ideas of purity and cleanliness to an untoward belief in the benevolence of the forces of nature within mankind, and, indeed, of the imperial institution itself.

Nevertheless, in a larger perspective, these concerns can be muted when the best works of the finest painters in this tradition are examined. In so many of the paintings of such artists as Hishida Shunsō, Imamura Shikō, Takeuchi Seihō, Kawabata Ryūshi, Maeda Seison, or Yokoyama Misao, any sensitive contemporary viewer, Western or Japanese, can be persuaded by the forces of artistic imagination to look beyond the often elegant surfaces in order to locate some quality of essential beauty which, the exemplars of the Japanese tradition have always insisted, can only be glimpsed lurking beyond the literalism of the picture plane itself.

The hundred years of the *Nihonga* movement have shown a number of complex, sometimes puzzling vicissitudes and compromises. Yet these too represent a microcosm of the larger problems faced by Japanese culture during this period. In that sense, whatever the role the leaders of the movement may have chosen for *Nihonga* to play, this art has in the end held a mirror up to the certain ideals, and to frustrations, compromises, and even fears of a rapidly evolving society. That function alone has given the movement a real significance. What is more, the visual beauty of the best of the works created in the *Nihonga* movement move far beyond the confines of the particular time and place of their creation. They are capable of truly touching and inspiring us now.

Notes

Unless otherwise noted, all translations are by the author.

1. Haryū Ichirō, "Nihonga no chūshō oboegaki" (Memorandum on Abstraction in *Nihonga*) in *Nihonga no chūshō: Sono Nihon-teki tokushoku* (Abstraction in *Nihonga*: Reconsideration of Its Japanese Features), exh. cat. (Tokyo: O Art Museum, 1994): 4.
2. See Iwasaki Yoshikazu, "Shōwa Nihonga no zentai-zō" (The Overview of Shōwa *Nihonga*) in *Shōwa no Nihonga 100-sen* (100 *Nihonga* Paintings of the Shōwa Era), (Tokyo: Asahi Shinbun-sha, 1991): 239–41.

Nihonga: Issues and Institutions

The articles included in this section discuss the issues and institutions vital to an understanding *of Nihonga*. They are arranged according to their general topics. The authors of the individual articles are noted with the titles of the articles. Translators are indicated at the ends of the articles.

Early Art Organizations
Joun-sha
Ryūchi-kai
The Japan Art Association

***Nihonga* and Art Education**
Juku, the Private Teaching Atelier
The Kyoto-Prefecture Painting School and the Kyoto Municipal Special School of Painting
The Tokyo School of Fine Arts
Examples (*Tehon*) and Textbooks (*Kyōkasho*)

Institutions
Tokyo National Museum
Imperial Household Artists (*Teishitsu gigeiin*)
Nihonga and the Imperial Household
"Bunten" and the Government-Sponsored Exhibitions (*Kanten*)
The Imperial Academy of Fine Arts

Development of Modern *Nihonga*
Okakura Tenshin and *Nihonga*
The Japan Art Institute
Takeuchi Seihō and the Kyoto Painting Circle
The Association for the Creation of National Painting
Bijin-ga

Materials and Techniques
Nihonga Materials and Techniques

Joun-sha

Harada Heisaku
Professor of Art History, Osaka University

Like many modern institutions that arose in the early Meiji era, *bijutsu dantai*, or the art organization, evolved gradually. Among the earliest art organizations, Joun-sha (literally, Cloud-Like Society), originated from pre-modern artists' gatherings and played a significant role in the history of Kyoto *Nihonga*.

In about 1866 or 1867, right before the Meiji Restoration, the successors to the prestigious Edo-period painting schools in Kyoto gathered to discuss the future in an informal meeting. On January 17, 1868, several months before the Restoration, they exhibited their own works during the course of a social gathering. Subsequently, they had a monthly gathering-and-exhibit, first on the 17th, and later on the 11th, at Shōamirō in Kyoto's Maruyama district and other places. This was the beginning of Joun-sha, a broad assembly of artists, whose core members included Nakajima Raishō (1796–1871), Maruyama Ōritsu (1817–1875), Yoshimura Kōichi (1818–1874), and Kunii Ōbun (1833–1887) from the Maruyama school; Shiokawa Bunrin of the Shijō school; Tosa Mitsufumi (1813–1879) of the Tosa school; Kanō Eishō (1816–Meiji) of the Kanō school; and Tsuruzawa Tanshin (1834–1893) of the Tsuruzawa school. By the early Meiji, Joun-sha is known to have attracted most of the prominent Kyoto painters such as Mori Kansai of the Mori school derived from the Maruyama lineage; Kishi Chikudō of the Kishi school; Mochizuki Gyokusen (1834–1913) of the Mochizuki school; Hara Zaisen (1849–1916) of the Hara school; Suzuki Hyakunen (1825–1891), Imao Keinen (1845–1924), Suzuki Shōnen (1848–1918), and Kubota Beisen of the Suzuki school; Kōno Bairei and Morikawa Sobun (1847–1902) of the Shijō school; Nakanishi Kōseki (1807–1884), Tanomura Chokunyū (1814–1907), Taniguchi Aizan (1816–1899), Shige Shuntō (1833–1904), and Tomioka Tessai of the *nanga* schools. At some later date, appropriating the Chinese-derived term *kōso*, meaning "painting," the group started calling itself Kōso Joun-sha.

These gatherings-and-exhibits that Joun-sha organized had their roots in the Spring-Autumn Exhibition at Higashiyama (*Higashiyama shunjū tenkan*). Organized by artists in conjunction with painting mounters (*hyōgu-ya*), who also functioned as private dealers, the Higashiyama exhibition had been regularly held at Shōamirō and Sōrinji Temple's Chōkian in Kyoto's Higashiyama district from the late eighteenth century. This inter-school painting and calligraphy party prefigured Joun-sha. Its foundation, in fact, followed the death of Yokoyama Seiki (1793–1865), the Shijō master and the most prominent painter of the time, who was centrally featured at the Higashiyama exhibitions. Losing their leader Seiki at the city's darkest time, the Kyoto painters may well have organized themselves "like a centerless cloud."

In addition to holding monthly gatherings-and-exhibits that fostered fellowship and encouraged the participation of collectors as well as men of taste, Joun-sha began to assume a more formal function in the wider context of Kyoto's art world. Although documentation is scarce, Joun-sha may well have been involved with an exhibition of old painting and calligraphy at Nishi Honganji Shoin, at the time of the Kyoto Exposition of 1871 as well as an exhibition of new painting and calligraphy for the first Kyoto Exposition in 1872. Records indicate that Joun-sha presented the painting demonstrations (*sekijō kigō*) beginning with the second Kyoto Exposition in 1873.

An intriguing anecdote suggests that there existed certain schisms among its leading members: in preparation for the painting demonstration in the second Kyoto Exposition, Mori Kansai drafted and circulated a notice to the members. Shiokawa Bunrin raged at this circumvention by his junior colleague. Kansai later learnt of Bunrin's wrath via their mutual friend, Kōno Bairei, and sent him a letter of apology. When Bunrin died in 1877, Kansai became the obvious leader of Joun-sha, as implied by contemporary references to "Kansai's Joun-sha" cited in the biography of Kansai in Kanzaki Ken'ichi's 1929 study, *History of Nihonga in Kyoto* (Kyoto ni okeru Nihonga-shi).

Joun-sha celebrated its twentieth anniversary at Shōamirō and other places on April 11, 1887, showing some 180 works by deceased members as well as Hyakunen, Aizan, Tessai, Chikudō, Shuntō, Gyokusen, Zaisen, Sobun, Bairei, Beisen, Kansai, and others. Three years later on April 19, 1890, together with Eishō-sha, a little-known Shijō organization, it mounted a double celebration of the eightieth anniversary of Goshun and the fiftieth anniversary of Keibun at Kinpukuji Temple in the northern Ichijōji district of Kyoto. The twenty-fifth anniversary celebration was held at Daiun'in at the central Teramachi district on May 13, 1892, exhibiting some forty works.

By the time of Kansai's death in 1894, Joun-sha found itself in a changed world. In 1890, a larger art organization that also included craftsmen and art lovers was established under the name of the Kyoto Art Association (Kyoto Bijutsu Kyōkai). While Joun-sha tended to maintain the late-Edo model of an artists' society, discouraging competition among its members in favor of congeniality, the Kyoto Art Association functioned in a way closer to today's art organizations. It published the *Kyoto Bijutsu Kyōkai zasshi* (Journal of the Kyoto Art Association) and organized an annual Exhibition of New and Old Art (*Shinko bijutsuhin ten*). Most characteristically, it initiated a jury system and began awarding prizes at the second Exhibition of Old and New Art, thus introducing the principle of competitions comparable to such government-sponsored exhibitions as the first and second Domestic

Painting Competitive Exhibition (*Naikoku kaiga kyōshinkai*) that had been held in 1882 and 1884.

Against this background, the loss of a strong leader touched off a series of reorganizing efforts. Immediately after Kansai's death, the administrative body consisting of a few secretaries was reformed into a multi-member committee. In addition to Sobun, Keinen, and Gyokusen, younger painters such as Utsumi Kichidō (1850–1923), Takeuchi Seihō, Taniguchi Kōkyō (1864–1915), Kunii Ōyō (1868–?), and Yamamoto Shunkyo were named committee members. In December 1895, Joun-sha held a general meeting and decided to rename itself the Painting Association (Kōso Kyōkai). On January 26, 1896, the Painting Association held its inaugural ceremony at the Kyoto Municipal Council House, thus formally putting an end to the name of Joun-sha. Keinen was named chair of the committee that also included Hara Zaisen, Sobun, Kōkyō, Seihō, Kichidō, Shunkyo, Kikuchi Hōbun, Kusano Ryūun (1864–?), Umemura Keizan (1866–?), Mori Yūzan (1869–1917), Miyake Gogyō (1864–1919), Kobayashi Gokyō (1871–1928), and Tsuji Kakō. Those dissatisfied with this development, including Kunii Ōyō and Takesu Yūkō (fl. Meiji), held a ceremony to continue Joun-sha at Yūrakukan in defiance of the new Painting Association in February.

Joun-sha now began its second life. The Painting Association, which attracted a majority of the former members, held meetings on the 11th of each month, following the old Joun-sha practice. It also launched an ambitious nationwide project by organizing the first and second National Painting Competitive Exhibition (*Zenkoku kaiga kyōshinkai*) in 1897 and 1899. Along with the changes made in its administrative structure, the national exhibition was an attempt to update the organization. However, its efforts toward revitalization did not deliver the expected result, partly because the Kyoto Art Association's Exhibition of New and Old Art assumed the function of an all-Kyoto exhibition; and partly because Kyoto was unable to offer the necessary social and financial base to support the Painting Association's national competition. In general, the reorganization of Joun-sha into the Painting Association was part of an inevitable trend to modernization. Yet the fact that the reorganization's effect was limited to the two national exhibitions—that the Painting Association could not supersede Joun-sha—illustrates the limitation of the Kyoto art world at a time when the national government in Tokyo was exercising its authority over cultural affairs.

As for the splinter group, named Kōso Joun-sha, it continued the spirit of Joun-sha, celebrating the thirtieth anniversary in 1897 by exhibiting the deceased members' works at Kenninji Temple's living quarters (*hōjō*) and publishing *Short Biographies of Deceased Members of Joun-sha* (Joun-sha ko-shain ryakuden). However, by 1907, its name had almost disappeared even from newspaper accounts.

Joun-sha was the link between the late-Edo and the early-Meiji Kyoto art world. In fact, in the tradition-bound painting world where hierarchy and seniority often spoke louder than merit, the very presence of Joun-sha and its inter-school spirit may have facilitated the emergence of newer organizations—such as the Kyoto-Prefecture Painting School (Kyoto-fu Gagakkō) that opened in June 1880 and the Kyoto Art Association—which in turn obscured Joun-sha's existence. In this respect, aside from its tangible achievements, Joun-sha provides an interesting reference point for an understanding of Kyoto's seemingly more unified attempts to adapt to modern times, in comparison with the history of Tokyo's more fractious art world.

(Translated by Reiko Tomii.)

Ryūchi-kai

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Ryūchi-kai, organized in 1879, was one of the first art organizations formed in Japan. At its inception, it may not have been what is now considered an art organization; it was rather an assembly of government bureaucrats charged with implementing the policy of *shokusan kōgyō* (increase in production, promotion of industry) during the early years of Meiji.

Information contained in the first volume of its organizational pamphlet, *Kōgei sōdan* (Discussion on Crafts), published in June 1880, indicates that Sano Tsunetami (1822–1902) and 26 top government officials met at Seichiin in Tenryūzan Temple in Ueno Park, Tokyo on March 15, 1879. Sano Tsunetami, who had occupied a number of positions including that of Finance Minister, was named the group's president; and Kawase Hideharu (1839–1928), whose appointments included Chief of the Bureau of Commerce in the Ministry of Finance, became vice president. The two had already taken charge of Japan's participation in international and national expositions, as had many others present, including Yamataka Nobuakira (1840–1904), Shioda Shin (1837–1917), Yamamoto Gorō, Ōmori Ichū (1844–1908), and Hirayama Eizō, who were for the most part senior officials in the Ministry of Finance or Ministry of the Interior. The fact that its members also included Matsuo Gisuke (1837–1902), president of the Industry and Commerce Company (Kiritsu Kōshō Kaisha)—a trade company owned equally by private citizens and the government which primarily exported art and craft objects—also confirms Ryūchi-kai's close affiliation with the government and its anticipated role in the *shokusan kōgyō* policy.

Among the goals of Ryūchi-kai were the protection of older art—traditional crafts and objects—much of which was being destroyed in the post-Restoration chaos or lost due to the outward flow abroad, and the development and promotion of export trade in art and crafts that were much sought after by Western collectors due to the popularity of *Japonisme*. In 1881, as a clear indication of its tie with the government, Ryūchi-kai assumed the responsibility for continuing the Exhibition of Old Art (*Kanko bijutsukai*) that the Ministry of the Interior had inaugurated in 1880. The Exhibition of Old Art was instituted as a complement to the Domestic Industrial Exposition (*Naikoku kangyō hakurankai*), first organized by the Ministry in 1877 to promote industry. The Exhibition of Old Art showed examples of traditional arts to serve as models and inspiration for the development of new export products by the current crafts industries.

During the early Meiji period, the protection of old art and the promotion of contemporary arts and crafts were two faces of one policy. This was implicit in the phrase *kōko rikon* (appreciating the old, [thus] benefitting the new), a notion based in the utilitarian nature that characterized the *shokusan kōgyō* policy. The Meiji government sought to attract interest and educate the taste of the public by protecting, collecting, and exhibiting fine works of older art (that is, appreciating the old) and promoting the production of art and crafts of high quality modeled after older art (that is, benefitting the new through appreciating the old). In this context, the Exhibition of Old Art provided a means for "appreciating the old," and the Domestic Industrial Expositions aimed at promoting the new or "benefitting the new." In terms of institutional settings, the task of "appreciating the old" was relegated to the museum (*hakubutsukan*) that collected and exhibited old works of art, while that of "benefitting the new" was accomplished by having the art gallery—which prefigured the art museum (*bijutsukan*)—which could exhibit contemporary arts and crafts side by side with the Hall of Agriculture and the Hall of Machinery at the Domestic Industrial Exposition.

Such expositions and exhibitions were new concepts implemented by the Meiji government, as was the Western categorization of "fine arts" consisting of "painting," "sculpture," and "architecture" for which new words had to be coined, namely *bijutsu*, *kaiga*, *chōkoku*, and *kenchiku*. Interestingly, Ryūchi-kai members were also engaged in the debate over the definition of *bijutsu*, as indicated by its publication *Kōgei sōdan*, as well as its 1883 amended bylaws.

Since the government decisively took the lead in promoting contemporary art through organizing the Domestic Industrial Exposition and participating in the international expositions, Ryūchi-kai in the beginning did not hold an exhibition that included contemporary art. It was not until the sixth Exhibition of Old Art in 1885 that Ryūchi-kai first included what were then called "new products" (*shin-seihin*), or contemporary works of art, in addition to older works of art. This move actually resulted from the failure of the two Japanese Art Exhibitions in Paris (*Pari Nihon bijutsu jūrankai*).

The Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce twice held the Domestic Painting Competitive Exhibition (*Naikoku kaiga kyōshinkai*) in 1882 and 1884 for the purpose of promoting new paintings that could serve as a foundation for the development of contemporary art. As if in response to the government initiatives, Ryūchi-kai organized the Japanese Art Exhibitions of *Nihonga* paintings in Paris in 1883 and 1884 in cooperation with the French version of Ryūchi-kai, Union Centrale des Arts Décoratifs. The Union, headed by Antonin Proust, a former official of the French Ministry of Fine Arts, had established the present Musée des Arts Décoratifs de Paris and aimed to encourage a close collaboration between art and industry. Samuel Bing (1838–1905), a French art dealer and promoter of Japanese art, and Wakai Kenzaburō (d.1908), a Japanese art dealer and assistant to Matsuo Gisuke, carried out the day-to-day transactions

between the two organizations.

The Paris exhibitions were not only intended to enhance Japan's international status, but their sales were also expected to serve as an important market research tool to probe Western tastes. Despite the popularity Japanese craft works enjoyed in Europe due to *Japonisme*, the Paris exhibitions that presented *Nihonga*—considered to be the foundation of crafts, in the Japanese mind—were unexpectedly unpopular, ending in miserable failure. This sobering outcome prompted much questioning of the relevance of the Domestic Painting Competitive Exhibition and the very policy of promoting contemporary art. It is fair to say that the change of Ryūchi-kai's bylaws which enabled exhibits of contemporary art along with old art in 1885, a year after the second Paris exhibition, was intended as a measure to rectify this problem.

According to the *Ryūchi-kai hōkoku* (Ryūchi-kai Report), published from 1883, some artists, including Gejō Keikoku (1842–1920) and Kawasaki Shōko (1886–1977), had joined the organization by the time of the Paris exhibitions; afterwards, the number of artist-members increased rapidly. Incidentally, around this time, artists increasingly organized themselves, as indicated by the founding of the Eastern Painting Society (Tōyō Kaiga-kai) primarily by *Nihonga* painters in 1884, following the cancellation of the Domestic Painting Competitive Exhibition. The Eastern Painting Society, headed by Shinagawa Yajirō, a high official of the Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce, was also characterized by its close government affiliation; as such, it could be viewed as a subsidiary organization of Ryūchi-kai.

In 1883, Ryūchi-kai's bylaws were amended in an attempt to expand the organization. One of the changes made by the amendments would affect the group's character and future: the imperial household designated Prince Arisugawa Taruhito (1835–1895) as Ryūchi-kai's governor (*sōsai*), a position created above that of president (*kaitō*). This was a direct reflection of the current political climate. The period beginning with the 1880s was a time when the country was moving swiftly to the political right. In order to solidify the imperial system that defined the political order of the modern nation of Japan, a series of major steps were taken after the 1881 imperial decree for the establishment of the National Diet, including the promulgation of the Meiji Constitution in 1889 and the opening of the Imperial Diet in 1890. It was a timely move for Ryūchi-kai to have a member of the royal family as governor during this period; it was also a cunning move characteristic of those high-ranking government officials who constituted a major segment of the organization. As early as July 1886, Ryūchi-kai was granted a parcel of land in Sakuragaoka in Ueno Park which was then under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of the Imperial Household, and it moved its office to the site (where the Ueno-no-mori Museum now stands).

Concurrent with this development, Ernest Fenollosa (1853–1908) and Okakura Tenshin (1862–1913) left Ryūchi-kai and established Kanga-kai in 1884. At first Kanga-kai exhibited older painting and performed appraisals of old art; in 1885, Fenollosa and Tenshin initiated a movement to create "new *Nihonga*" which would incorporate aspects of Western art. It was the origin of what is commonly known as the New Faction (*Shinpa*) of *Nihonga*. Ryūchi-kai then became known as the Old Faction (*Kyūha*) in contrast to the "new" party. The configuration of the "new" vs. "old" forces, from this time on, was to persist in the art world. On the one hand, the New Faction was continued from Kanga-kai to the Tokyo School of Fine Arts (Tokyo Bijutsu Gakkō), then to the Japan Art Institute (Nihon Bijutsu-in). On the other hand, the Old Faction continued as Ryūchi-kai changed its name to the Japan Art Association (Nihon Bijutsu Kyōkai) and further strengthened its ties to the imperial household in 1887.

(Translated by Hiroshi Nara/Reiko Tomii.)

The Japan Art Association

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In December 1887, the Japan Art Association (Nihon Bijutsu Kyōkai) was reorganized from the art organization Ryūchi-kai. This transformation cannot be fully understood without considering another event that took place two months earlier, the founding of the Tokyo School of Fine Arts (Tokyo Bijutsu Gakkō), which would not open until 1889—or without looking at the larger picture that defined the art world at that time.

The Tokyo School of Fine Arts was modeled after Western institutions of art education, under the auspices of the Ministry of Education. Two instrumental figures associated with it were the American Ernest Fenollosa (1853–1908) and Okakura Tenshin (1862–1913), both of whom broke from Ryūchi-kai to found Kanga-kai in 1884. While they advocated the creation of new *Nihonga* through Kanga-kai, they also participated in the research of traditional painting undertaken by the Painting Research Advisory (Zuga Chōsa-kai), created by the Ministry of Education in 1884 and renamed the Painting Research Division (Zuga Torishirabe Kakari) one year later. Both Kanga-kai and the research agencies preceded the school: Kanga-kai functioned as Fenollosa's private experimental laboratory, and the research agencies official status to his endeavor.

The establishment of the new art school greatly shocked those affiliated with Ryūchi-kai, for this course of events clearly demonstrated that Fenollosa and Tenshin—who led the New Faction (*Shinpa*) and denounced Ryūchi-kai as the Old Faction (*Kyūha*)—had seized firm control of this key area in art administration under the Ministry of Education. The contest between the New and Old Factions that had originated in the rivalry between Kanga-kai and Ryūchi-kai thus entered a second phase, involving the Ministry of Education (connected to the New Faction) and the Ministry of the Imperial Household (associated with the Old Faction) into the conflict within the *Nihonga* world.

Already in 1883 Ryūchi-kai had moved to build a power base in the Ministry of the Imperial Household when it amended its bylaws to embrace Prince Arisugawa Taruhito (1835–1895) as governor (*sōsai*). The creation of the new school prompted Ryūchi-kai to take action to further strengthen its imperial ties: two months later, Ryūchi-kai held a special meeting, altered its bylaws, and reorganized itself as the Japan Art Association. Especially notable was that the Association's bylaws now allowed for the appointment of a member of the imperial family to its governorship, whereas Ryūchi-kai's amended bylaws had stipulated only the specific appointment of Prince Arisugawa. In fact, the Association reserved the governor's position for members of the imperial household for a long time, maintaining its imperial connection. The title of Imperial Household Artist (*Teishitsu gigeiin*) instituted by the Ministry of the Imperial Household in 1890 illustrates the extent of the Association's connection to the imperial household and the Ministry.

Reorganized from Ryūchi-kai—but retaining Prince Arisugawa as governor (*sōsai*) and Sano Tsunetami as president (*kaitō*)—the Japan Art Association inaugurated the biannual exhibitions called the Exhibition of New and Old Art (*Shinko bijutsuten*) to be held every spring and fall, beginning in 1888. The exhibit of contemporary art used to be no more than an appendage to Ryūchi-kai's Exhibition of Old Art (*Kanko bijutsukai*). However, as the Association made aggressive efforts to expand its influence in the art world, contemporary art increasingly took a more central place at its biannual exhibitions; the Association began to take a form much closer to today's art organizations in Japan that function primarily as exhibition societies. At the first exhibition in 1888, 1,824 contemporary works by 328 artists were exhibited, in comparison to 1,603 works in the old art section. Association membership grew dramatically, from 478 in 1888 to 645 in the following year, reaching 1,023 in 1906. The imperial household's support helped the expansion: members of the royal family visited the exhibitions, and the Ministry of the Imperial Household frequently purchased paintings and received some of artworks as gifts at the exhibitions. In other words, during the Meiji 20s (1887–1896) when the imperial system was firmly established as the foundation of the modern nation of Japan, the Association, backed by the imperial household, rapidly expanded its influence.

At the Association's exhibition, contemporary art was divided into five categories: Section 1 for painting, including calligraphy; Section 2 for architecture and gardens; Section 3 for sculpture; Section 4 for ceramics and porcelain, glassware, *shippō* (cloisonné), and metal wares; and Section 5 for lacquer ware, *makie* (painting in gold and silver on lacquer), and embroidery and weaving. It is significant that all genres of art were included in the exhibition, given the fact that most art organizations which were being formed one after another during and after the Meiji 20s tended to specialize in only one of these categories. The Japan Art Association's ambition was truly comprehensive and national in its scale. Another notable detail was the lack of mention of traditional schools such as Kanō or Shijō, indicating that the reshaping of the art world was under way from the traditional school-based configuration to the modern genre-based formation that would inevitably lead to a new order.

On the other hand, the Association retained calligraphy in the category of painting, implying an adherence to the traditional ideal. In Japan, the Western concept of painting and its translation, *kaiga*, became current around the early 1880s. Before the newly coined term was introduced, the word *shoga* (calligraphy and painting), derived from Chinese

aesthetics, was employed. The shift from *shoga* to *kaiga* indicates a kind of Westernization of the value system concerning painting; at the same time, it signified the segregation of calligraphy from painting. The Tokyo School of Fine Arts, which was tied to the New Faction, never established a calligraphy department (the present Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music continues this tradition). Furthermore, in many art organizations affiliated with the New Faction, calligraphy as well as *nanga* and *bunjin-ga* which were closely related to calligraphy were excluded. It may be said that calligraphy and *nanga* constituted an ideological fault line between the New and Old Factions.

Incidentally, it is the Japan Art Association (Nihon Bijutsu Kyōkai) that first used the word *Nihon* (Japan) in the organization name. Afterwards, a number of art organizations, including the Japan Painting Association (Nihon Kaiga Kyōkai) and the Japan Art Institute (Nihon Bijutsu-in), which were created during the Meiji 20s and 30s (1887–1896 and 1897–1906), followed suit. It should be noted that many of those who embraced "*Nihon*" in their names were *Nihonga* organizations; throughout the Meiji period, no *yōga* organization did the same, perhaps due to *yōga*'s Western orientation. Seen against the background of Japan's maturation as a modern nation-state and the accompanying formation of national identity during the Meiji 20s, simple observations about art organization names reveal the complexity of Japan's modernization process.

The Japan Art Association rapidly expanded during the Meiji 20s. Entering the Meiji 30s, however, the Association's influence began to wane. A number of leading members died during this period; Sano Tsunetami who led the Association from the time of Ryūchi-kai passed away in 1902. In addition, after the Ministry of Education in 1907 established an annual exhibition called Bunten (The Ministry of Education Art Exhibition; *Monbushō bijutsu tenrankai*), fashioned after the French Salon, the stars of the art world moved to this new venue. The last blow came when the Imperial Academy of Fine Arts (Teikoku Bijutsu-in) was created, offering artists a new opportunity for authority and prestige in 1918.

The Association's membership peaked at 1,568 in 1903 and then began to decline gradually in the rapidly changing map of the art world. During and after the Meiji 30s, numerous small and medium-size art organizations that situated themselves between the New and Old Factions were formed. Many talented younger artists who were interested in artistic matters rather than authority and prestige aligned themselves with these moderate groups as well as the New Faction. Quite a few *kanten sakka* (artists who exhibited in the government-sponsored exhibitions) emerged from the middle-of-the-road camp. As a result, by the mid 1910s, although the Association continued wield social power, it had lost its artistic vitality and began to have an air of authoritarianism without substance.

After World War II, the Japan Art Association presented annual exhibitions until its tenth in 1957, but the Association's existence became almost irrelevant. Its prewar alliance with the imperial household caused to quickly decline all the more, when the imperial household was removed from the seat of the political power and underwent democratization. Today, all that is left of the Association is its office in Tokyo; it instituted the Praemium Imeperiale (*Sekai bunka-shō*), nominally commemorating the centennial of its foundation in 1988.

Scholarship on *Nihonga* has been primarily concerned with the New Faction, and the groups of middle-of-the-road and *kanten* artists, regarding them as the mainstream of *Nihonga*, while the Old Faction, that is, those affiliated with Ryūchi-kai and the Japan Art Association, have received scant attention in spite of their contributions to the development of *Nihonga*. The disparity indicates that the problem lies not so much in art per se as in the way art historical study has been conducted under the Ministry of Education—to which *Nihonga*'s mainstream was connected. In this respect, the history of art historical study itself should be reexamined.

(Translated by Hiroshi Nara/Reiko Tomii.)

Juku, the Private Teaching Atelier

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Juku, or the private teaching atelier, is a form of art education that was strictly based on the traditional master-disciple relationship within a school (*ha* or *ryūha*) such as Kanō, Tosa, Maruyama, or Shijō. One of the most profound transformations of the painting world in Japan after the Meiji Restoration took place in the area of the education system—the change from *juku* of the Edo period to *gagakkō* or *bijutsu gakkō* (public painting or art school) of the modern time. However, it did not happen overnight; it may not be an exaggeration to say that the art school superseded the private *juku* only after World War II.

Two anecdotes related to the Kyoto Painting Circle (*Kyoto gadan*) further illustrate this process. Toward the end of the Edo period, in 1855, when Kyoto painters from various schools participated in the rebuilding of the Kyoto Imperial Palace, the masters drew up an agreement prohibiting their disciples from interacting with other schools' masters or leaving their own schools. In 1880, a quarter century later, the Kyoto-Prefecture Painting School (Kyoto-fu Gagakkō) was opened upon the collective appeal of painters of various schools. Yet, it was reported in its early days that "There is an unfavorable tendency among teachers from various schools that gravely affects students; whenever a teacher joins or leaves the Painting School, his students follow."

What, then, was the teaching at *juku* like? Hashimoto Gahō, one of the Meiji *Nihonga* masters, recounted his apprenticeship from 1847 through 1860 with Kanō Shōsen'in Tadanobu (1823–1880), the shogunate painter and Kanō master of the Kobiki-chō branch in Edo (present-day Tokyo). According to Gahō's 1889 memoir, Kobiki-chō Kanō's *juku* admitted only family members of Kanō painters who belonged to the samurai class. An ordinary samurai needed an introduction from his clan's lord in order to gain entrance, for the Kobiki-chō Kanō atelier, along with three other Kanō ateliers in Edo, functioned as the official academy. Gahō addressed his master Kanō Tadanobu as "Tono-sama" or "Lord"; their relationship was not so much master-disciple as master-subject.

Tadanobu's disciples had already mastered considerable painting technique by the time of their admittance. In order to absorb the Kanō style and techniques, they concentrated on copying Kanō examples (*tehon*) as well as modelbooks or sketches after paintings (*funpon*) long handed down through the Kobiki-chō Kanō family. It was prohibited to practice *bunjin-ga* or *ukiyo-e*, that is, anything outside the Kanō canon; Kanō pupils were not allowed even to mingle with painters from other schools.

After about ten years of study, a disciple was given one Chinese character from the master's alternative artist name (*betsugō*) as his artist name (*gō*). Another few years earned him another Chinese character, this time from the master's artist name. Now that he had successfully completed his study and been awarded the license to teach and practice as a professional painter, he was permitted to go home. In the case of Gahō, he was given "tada" from his lord-master Tadanobu and called himself "Gahō" ("tada" being the Japanese reading of the Chinese character "ga").

At the Kobiki-chō Kanō atelier, a strict hierarchical order was in place, with the lord-master Tadanobu at the top, followed by *deshi-gashira* (head disciple), *ehon-kata* (in charge of *ehon*, or copy books), and *enogu-kata* (in charge of *enogu*, or paint pigments). The top disciple, *deshi-gashira*, commuted to the Kanō estate, while the two elders living at the estate served as *ehon-kata* and *enogu-kata*. These three taught the other disciples collectively; Tadanobu rarely gave any personal lessons.

An example of the Meiji-era private teaching atelier is Kōno Bairei's *juku* which he first opened in Kyoto in 1867, a year before the Meiji Restoration. Bairei was an important educator on two counts: many painters who would later represent the Kyoto painting circle studied with Bairei at his *juku*; and Bairei played a major role at the Kyoto-Prefecture Painting School in devising the curriculum at its opening in 1880 and later in reorganizing the curriculum in 1888.

Bairei's manuals—*Painting Exercises: Examples for Brush-work* (Shūgakan [*Unpitsu tehon*]) dated 1889 (plate 17) and *Précis of Learning Painting* (Shūga kōyō), undated—survive to this day to help us understand his teaching method. The vivid account of his *juku* is provided by Edward Sylvester Morse (1838–1925), the American zoologist who visited his *juku* in 1882. In his *Japan Day by Day*, Morse's August 8 entry reads:

> I visited the artist Bairei to employ him to make a copy of a picture he had painted for Rokubei, the potter, illustrating the process of pottery-making. I found Mr. Bairei, who is a teacher, in the midst of a class of pupils, who were busy with their work, all on the floor with their copies in front of them, many of them being boys of twelve or younger. Some of the older pupils, he told me, had been with him for ten years.... The pupils come... every day except for Sunday, which has lately become a holiday. The price of tuition is thirty cents a month, and the teacher supplied paper, brushes, ink, colors, etc. In three years the pupils learn to copy well. The first lessons consist of simple lines, diaper work, and the like. The next year, they paint flowers; after that mountains and scenery; and finally figures, first drawing drapery, then the nude figure from life. Some of the pupils come from the artisan class, such as potters and others whose occupations demand designs or decoration; the other pupils come from the samurai class. Mr. Bairei has

twenty pupils, besides a few who practice at home and bring their work to him once a week. After an interesting interview.... Mr. Bairei presented me with a large roll of paper which consisted of the exercises of the school for that day: beautiful drawings in strong, vigorous brush strokes of flowers, fruit, and boats.

Over the years, Bairei headed several *juku*: the earlier Ryōun-juku (literally, Transcending Cloud Atelier) to which Tsuji Kakō, Kikuchi Hōbun (1862–1918), Takeuchi Seihō and Taniguchi Kōkyō (1864–1915) belonged; Kōno Private Atelier (Kōno Shijuku), founded after he left the Kyoto-Prefecture Painting School in 1881; and Taiseigi-kai which existed following his second tenure at the Painting School from 1888 through 1890 and was absorbed into the Private Atelier within a year.

At the Kōno Private Atelier—which Morse most likely visited—students were divided into three categories: regular students (*seisoku-sei*), irregular students (*hensoku-sei*), and stipend students (*kyūhi-sei*). Stipend students were those who could not afford to pay tuition and lived at the atelier; they were somewhat similar to the student-servants (*gakuboku*) or live-in apprentices (*uchi-deshi*) who would help with the master's household chores. It is known that the *nanga* painter Tanomura Chokunyū also had the stipend-student arrangement; however, the category of irregular students was original to Bairei. He accepted merchants' and craftsmen's apprentices as irregular students, who studied along with stipend students as well as regular students who paid full tuition, putting into practice his belief that the society of a new age needed painting as a useful, living skill.

Bairei gave small exams every week and large exams twice a year. The exam results determined the seating order—the better the results, the better the seating—to encourage students to work hard.

Other painters, such as Tanomura Chokunyū (1814–1907), Taniguchi Aizan (1816–1899), Ikeda Unshō (1825–1886), Suzuki Hyakunen (1825–1891) and his son Shōnen (1848–1918), Morikawa Sobun (1847–1902), Kubota Beisen, Imao Keinen (1845–1924), Kikuchi Hōbun, and Takeuchi Seihō, also had their own private *juku*. As the public art school program evolved from the Kyoto-Prefecture Painting School to the Kyoto-City School of Arts and Crafts (Kyoto-shi Bijutsu Kōgei Gakkō) and expanded with the addition of the Kyoto Municipal Special Painting School (Kyoto Shiritsu Kaiga Senmon Gakkō) in 1909, the *juku* education began to lose its predominance. Accordingly, young painters who may be described as the "Art School group" emerged from Kyoto's art schools. Especially significant was the establishment of the Association for the Creation of National Painting (Kokuga Sōsaku Kyōkai) in 1918 by the first graduates from the Special Painting School. These school-trained painters demonstrated that it was possible to create a new, freer art movement in Kyoto where the tradition-oriented Kyoto painting circle was nurtured in the environment of *juku*.

Throughout the Taishō and prewar Shōwa, *juku* continued to occupy an important, if less central, place in painting education; among those active during this period were Seihō's Chikujō-kai, Nishiyama Suishō's (1879–1958) Seikō-sha, Dōmoto Inshō's Tōkyū-sha, Yamamoto Shunkyo's Sanae-kai, Hōbun's Kikuchi-juku, Nishimura Goun's Shinchō-sha, and Tsuchida Bakusen's Sannan-kai along with Ikeda Yōson's Seitō-sha, Kanashima Keika's (1892–1974) Kinugasa-kai, and Uda Tekison's (1896–1980) Hakushin-sha. After 1945, *juku* increasingly declined; the practice of having a live-in apprentice (*uchi-deshi*) also became rare. Today, only a few *juku*, such as Shinchō-sha and Tōkyū-sha, remain, functioning primarily as study groups (*kenkyū kikan*).

(Translated by Reiko Tomii.)

The Kyoto-Prefecture Painting School and the Kyoto Municipal Special School of Painting

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After the collapse of the three-century-long Tokugawa shogunate rule, the Meiji government instituted sweeping changes that led to a fundamental transformation of Japan's social order and value systems. One of many post-Restoration changes involved the establishment of a painting school in the ancient capital of Kyoto, profoundly affecting its art world.

Since Kyoto was among the first localities to establish public elementary, secondary, and special technical schools, it is not surprising that Makimura Masanao (1834–1896), Kyoto's governor, was receptive to proposals recommending the establishment of an art school. In August 1878, one such proposal was advanced by Tanomura Chokunyū (1814–1907), who claimed his teacher, Tanomura Chikuden (1777–1835), the revered scholar and literati painter, had conceived a plan for establishing an art school that would replace the master-based *juku* (private teaching atelier).

Another proposal came from the artists related to Shiokawa Bunrin and Joun-sha. A month after Chokunyū's proposal, four Maruyama-Shijō artists—Kōno Bairei (Bunrin's student) and Mochizuki Gyokusen (1834–1913), joined by Kubota Beisen and Kose Shōseki (1843–1919)—submitted to Makimura a proposal for founding a painting school with an "outline of school rules and course descriptions." The following year, in November 1879, Governor Makimura reported to the Ministry of Education the foundation of the prefectural painting school, asserting painting's usefulness as "the basis of all industries and productions, thus a necessity in people's lives" and adopting several aspects of the Bairei-Gyokusen outline.

The new art school, originally called Kyoto-Prefecture Painting School (Kyoto-fu Gagakkō), opened in temporary quarters within the Kyoto Imperial Palace grounds in June 1880. Over the next two decades, it repeatedly changed its name and location. In 1889, the painting school was transferred to the control of Kyoto City and renamed the Kyoto-City Painting School (Kyoto-shi Gagakkō); it was again renamed the Kyoto-City School of Arts (Kyoto-shi Bijutsu Gakkō) in 1891; then restructured as the Kyoto-City School of Arts and Crafts (Kyoto-shi Bijutsu Kōgei Gakkō) in 1894. In 1901, the school was once more renamed the Kyoto Municipal School of Arts and Crafts (Kyoto Shiritsu Bijutsu Kōgei Gakkō), and settled at its own school facilities at Yoshida of the Kamigyō district after several moves from one temporary quarters to another in 1907.

The Kyoto-Prefecture Painting School was established "to encourage refinements of fine art, to provide proper foundations for crafts and technical arts, and ultimately to serve society and to perfect culture," as stated in the school's "Teaching Guide" (*Gagakkō kyōsoku*). Kunishige Masafumi, acting for the Kyoto Governor, named 43 painters as *shusshi* (Appointees), including Bairei, Gyokusen, Ikeda Unshō (1825–1886), Imao Keinen (1845–1924), Oda Hankei, Kishi Chikudō, Kunii Ōbun (1833–1887), Taniguchi Aizan (1816–1899), Tamura Sōryū (1846–1918), Tosa Mitsutake, Nakanishi Kōseki (1807–1884), Morikawa Sobun (1847–1902), Mori Kansai, Hara Zaisen (1849–1916), Suzuki Hyakunen (1825–1891), and Koyama Sanzō (1860–1927). In accordance with the original Bairei-Gyokusen proposal, the instructors were elected to take charge of four denominations: Gyokusen for the Eastern denomination, or Japanese *shasei* and *Yamato-e* paintings; Koyama for the Western denomination, or Western painting (drawing, watercolor, oil painting); Aizan for the Southern denomination, or *nanga* literati painting; and Hyakunen and Bairei for the Northern denomination, or the Kanō/Sesshū schools.

In comparison to the Technical Art School (Kōbu Bijutsu Gakkō), which was founded in 1876 and taught only Western painting and sculpture, it is significant that the new painting school in Kyoto taught both Western and Japanese painting. However, it adhered to the traditional Six Canons of Painting (*Garoppō* or *Hua Liufa*) by Xie He—sympathetic responsiveness of the vital spirit, structural method in the use of the brush, fidelity to the object in portraying forms, conformity to kind in applying colors, proper planning in the placing of elements, and transmission of experience of the past in making copies—indicating the transitional nature of its curriculum. For instance, the three-year/six-semester curriculum of the East denomination consisted of: for the first year, ink painting including one-stroke painting (*ippitsu-ga*) and brush technique (the first semester) and sketches of landscapes, plants, and animals (the second semester); for the second year, wash drawing including light coloring, preparation of wash, copying, and silk preparation (the first semester) and copying old paintings, statues, and vessels as well as sketchbooks (*funpon*) and preparatory patterns for sculptures and *makie* lacquer ware (the second semester); and for the third and final year, range of coloring (*chū-saishiki*, *doro-biki*, *sunago-maki*, *konjō-biki*) and preparation of thick pigments (the first semester) and dark/thick coloring (*dai-saishiki*) of *Yamato-e* and *yūsoku-ga*, or painting of the ancient court practices (the second semester).

In 1888, the four denominations were consolidated into the Eastern and Western painting courses. Completion of elementary school or the equivalent was required for admission; the graduate requirements were extended to five years: two years of basic study in the general painting course (*futsū gagaku-ka*), followed by three years of advanced study in the specialized or applied painting courses (*senmon gagaku-ka* or *ōyō gagaku-ka*). The following year, the Western painting course was eliminated; sculpture and crafts design courses were added at the time of the school's reorganization in 1894.

The school's transformation toward a more modern organization paralleled that of the painting world: as the artists who played key roles in the initial stage, such as Bairei, Gyokusen, Zaisen, Hyakunen, and Chokunyū, gave way to younger painters, the notion of traditional schools (*ha* or *ryūha*) as exemplified by the earlier four-denominational division, was supplanted by the Western concepts of pure vs. applied art along with the modern categories of painting, sculpture, and crafts. The school also organized exchange exhibitions with foreign schools; numerous teachers, including Kubota Beisen, Takeuchi Seihō, and Yamamoto Shunkyo, travelled and studied abroad. At the same time, as the school evolved, *Nihonga* securely occupied the central position in the modern art education system in Kyoto.

In 1909, the Kyoto Municipal Special School of Painting (Kyoto Shiritsu Kaiga Senmon Gakkō) was built next to its sister institution, the Kyoto Municipal School of Arts and Crafts. It offered advanced training to those students who wished to teach or specialize in *Nihonga*. The school consisted of two sections, *Nihonga* and design (*zuan*), each providing three categories of courses, the regular, preliminary, and adjunct courses (*honka*, *yoka*, and *bekka*). Completion of secondary school or the equivalent was required for admission; graduates from the older school could enter the first year of the new school. In the beginning, prominent Kyoto painters, such as Takeuchi Seihō, Kikuchi Hōbun (1862–1918), Taniguchi Kōkyō (1864–1915), Yamamoto Shunkyo, and Kikuchi Keigetsu taught there, with many teaching at both schools.

The Special School of Painting signalled a further evolution of modern *Nihonga* through dismantling the private teaching system of *juku*. It was a time of new ideas and excitements: the government-sponsored exhibition, Bunten (The Ministry of Education Art Exhibition; *Monbushō bijutsu tenrankai*), was established in Tokyo in 1907; Kyoto Imperial Museum, Kyoto Imperial University, and Kansai Art Institute (Kansai Bijutsu-in) under Asai Chū's (1856–1907) leadership were founded in Kyoto in 1895, 1897, and 1906 respectively. Furthermore, Nakai Sōtarō (1879–1966), a 29-year-old graduate of Tokyo Imperial University, arrived at the new school as an instructor of art history, informing students of the tendencies of modern Western art. His association with the school's first students, including Irie Hakō, Sakakibara Shihō, Murakami Kagaku, Ono Chikkyō, and Tsuchida Bakusen, led to the foundation of the Association for the Creation of National Painting (Kokuga Sōsaku Kyōkai) in 1918.

Japan's defeat in World War II in 1945 set in motion the transformation of the two schools, fondly called by the people of Kyoto "Bikō" (abbreviation of "Bijutsu Kōgei") and "Kaisen" (from "Kaiga Senmon"). Under the nationwide school and university reforms, "Bikō" or the Kyoto Municipal School of Arts and Crafts became the Kyoto Municipal High School of Art (Kyoto Shiritsu Bijutsu Kōtō Gakkō), an upper secondary school; then attached to the Hiyoshigaoka High School briefly; and finally reconstituted as the Kyoto Dōda High School of Arts and Crafts (Kyoto Shiritsu Dōda Bijutsu Kōgei Kōtō Gakkō), offering a specialized art education.

"Kaisen" or the Kyoto Municipal Special School of Painting was renamed the Kyoto Municipal Special School of Art (Kyoto Shiritsu Bijutsu Senmon Gakkō) in 1945, when the section of Western painting was revived and then had a strong impact on the *Nihonga* section. In 1950, the school was accorded the status of a new-system university, under the name of the Kyoto Municipal College of Art (Kyoto Shiritsu Bijutsu Daigaku), as a college with four divisions: *Nihonga*, Western painting, sculpture, and crafts. In 1969, it established a music department and changed its name to the Kyoto City University of Arts (Kyoto Shiritsu Geijutsu Daigaku). In 1980, it moved to its present location at Ōe Kutsukake-chō of the Nishigyō district and established a graduate school of art (painting, sculpture, design and crafts, and science of arts), in celebration of its centennial.

The evolution of Kyoto's modern art educational system is intimately intertwined with the history of the modern *Nihonga* movement. The fact that it produced more than a dozen recipients of the Order of Cultural Merit (*Bunka kunshō*), including Takeuchi Seihō, is a testimony to its accomplishments.

(Translated by Sumiko Obata/Reiko Tomii.)

The Tokyo School of Fine Arts

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The Tokyo School of Fine Arts (Tokyo Bijutsu Gakkō), founded in 1887, was a national art school that held an important place within Japan's arts administration system. Its influence not only dominated Japanese art circles, but through the foreign students who studied there, reached neighboring China, Korea, and Taiwan. A quick look through the list of its graduates illustrates the profound connection the school maintained with the development of modern *Nihonga*: Yokoyama Taikan, Shimomura Kanzan, Hishida Shunsō, Yūki Somei (1875–1957), Hirafuku Hyakusui, Matsuoka Eikyū (1881–1938), Nakamura Gakuryō (1890–1969), Yoshimura Tadao (1898–1952), Yamaguchi Hōshun, Yamamoto Kyūjin, Hashimoto Meiji (1904–1991), Higashiyama Kaii, Sugiyama Yasushi, Takayama Tatsuo, Moriya Tadashi (b.1912), Kayama Matazō, and Hirayama Ikuo.

After the Meiji Restoration, Japan rapidly introduced Western ideas and techniques in various areas, including art, under the policy of *shokusan kōgyō* (promotion of industries and increase in production). However, the government soon adjusted its goals to promote traditional arts as export items; this reinvigorated traditional schools of painting, sculpture, and crafts that had been in decline since the Restoration.

At the center of the revival movement, which would eventually lead to the foundation of the art academy, were Ernest Fenollosa (1853–1908) and Okakura Tenshin (1862–1913). Fenollosa, who was originally invited to Japan to teach philosophy at Tokyo University, came to believe in the high artistic merit of Japanese ancient art. Preservation of old art and the revival and renewal of traditional arts became his main concerns. Fenollosa preached the need for traditional revival and in 1884 founded the private art organization Kanga-kai in which he worked with Kanō Hōgai and other Kanō-school painters in an attempt to foster a modernized practice of traditional painting. Tenshin exploited his position at the Ministry of Education to further the cause of a traditional revival within the context of the governmental arts administration.

In 1887, the Tokyo School of Fine Arts was authorized by the Ministry of Education. Initially housed in the building of the Edūcational Museum (Kyōiku Hakubutsukan) in Ueno Park, the school initiated classes to train painters and art teachers in 1889. Hamao Arata (1849–1925), was its first, but temporary, director; Tenshin then became director in 1890. An all boys school—only Western female students were accepted at the beginning, whereas female Japanese students had to wait until 1946—it offered a five-year curriculum, two years of the general course and an additional three of special studies. The painting department, the largest in terms of student enrollment (19), offered courses only in *Nihonga*. Instructors included three Kanō painters, Hashimoto Gahō, Kanō Tomonobu (1843–1912), and Yūki Masaaki (1834–1904), along with two Kyoto painters, Kawabata Gyokushō of the Maruyama-Shijō school and Kose Shōseki (1843–1919) of an eclectic background (a former instructor at the Kyoto-Prefecture Painting School). The sculpture program centered on traditional wood carving, taught by Takamura Kōun (1852–1934), Ishikawa Kōmei (1852–1913), and others. At the art crafts department, Kanō Natsuo (1828–1898), Unno Shōmin (1844–1915), Ogawa Shōmin (1847–1891), and others taught such traditional techniques as metal engraving (*chōkin*) and lacquer.

During its first decade, under Tenshin's guidance, the school exclusively promoted education in traditional arts. It also maintained a close tie with the adjoining Imperial Museum (Teikoku Hakubutsukan), where Tenshin headed the art section. For the first year and a half, Fenollosa taught entry-level students, lecturing on aesthetics and advising on studio practice. In 1890, after Fenollosa returned to his own country to work at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, the young Tenshin assumed leadership.

While maintaining the tradition of Japanese painting as the basis of new painting, Tenshin emphasized the importance of individual originality that should replace mindless adherence to the old practices. Under Tenshin's so-called progressive nationalist approach, highly talented students, including Yokoyama Taikan, Shimomura Kanzan, and Hishida Shunsō, explored ways to innovate *Nihonga*. The major project during Tenshin's tenure was participation in the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago. The painting department's instructors and students, under the direction of Tenshin and Kuki Ryūichi (1852–1931), president of the Imperial Museum, executed the interior decoration of Japan's national pavilion.

However, the monopoly of *Nihonga* at Japan's only national art school caused a great deal of rancor among proponents of *yōga*, especially after the Sino-Japanese War (1894–1895), when the trend of Westernization was re-intensifying in various areas. In view of the situation, Tenshin requested that the government expand the school, adding Western and Chinese painting divisions. As a result, the Western painting section was inaugurated within the painting department in 1896; Kuroda Seiki (1866–1924) and Kume Keiichirō (1866–1934), both having spent several years in France to study oil painting, became teachers. Leading *pleinairiste* painters, Kuroda and Kume capitalized on their origins in the aristocratic/intellectual class and their strong ties to powerful government officials to introduce a French-derived curriculum. As schisms between the *Nihonga* and *yōga* sections within the painting department seriously undermined Tenshin's leadership and an anti-Tenshin campaign surfaced, Tenshin was eventually forced out of the

school—as well as from the museum—in 1898. Hashimoto Gahō, chair of the *Nihonga* department, along with his pupils now teaching there, including Yokoyama Taikan, Shimomura Kanzan, Saigō Kogetsu (1873–1912), Hishida Shunsō, and Terasaki Kōgyō (1866–1919), also left the school and immediately participated in the founding of Japan Art Institute (Nihon Bijutsu-in) with Tenshin in pursuit of the revival of tradition.

In the aftermath of this incident, the school undertook a program of reform, adopting the policy of promoting both traditional and Western painting. Following the loss of a massive number of painters, the *Nihonga* department directed Kawabata Gyokushō and Araki Kanpo to overhaul the educational program. The number of *Nihonga* students continued to dwindle, although the brief presence in 1898–1899 of Kosaka Shōdō (1870–1899), a younger, reform-minded teacher who attempted to fuse *Nihonga* and *yōga*, was encouraging. In addition, the department sent out new graduates, most notably Yūki Somei (graduated from the *Nihonga* department in 1897 and studied at the *yōga* department until 1900) and Hirafuku Hyakusui (graduated in 1899), two of Gyokushō's pupils who formed the Musei-kai group that advocated naturalism and study of *yōga*.

In 1901, Masaki Naohiko (1862–1940) arrived at the school as its new director. A rare and superb leader, Masaki promptly undertook the expansion and reorganization of the school. During his 31-year tenure, the school's foundation became solid and stable for the first time in its history. By the time his last reform was instituted in 1923, the school had expanded to include ten departments—*Nihonga*, *yōga*, sculpture, architecture, design, metal work (*kinkō*), metal casting (*chūzō*), lacquer, photography, and art education—with 74 teachers and 552 students.

The *Nihonga* department enormously benefitted from Masaki's sure-handed leadership. At the time of his arrival, it had so declined that its student enrollment for the first time was less than that of the five-year-old *yōga* department. To rectify the grave situation, Masaki hired back Terasaki Kōgyō and Shimomura Kanzan from the Japan Art Institute in 1901, adding Yūki Somei, the department's graduate, the next year. During the decade following the establishment of Bunten (The Ministry of Education Art Exhibition; *Monbushō bijutsu tenrankai*) in 1907, which stimulated activity in the art world, the school managed to amass an impressive group of gifted painting teachers including—in addition to Gyokushō, Kōgyō, and Somei—Kobori Tomoto (1864–1931) and Matsuoka Eikyū, another of its own graduate. After Gyokushō's death in 1913, the appointment of Kawai Gyokudō further enlivened and strengthened the department.

In the early Shōwa period, after Masaki's retirement, the deaths and resignations of *Nihonga* instructors again weakened the department. After Gyokudō resigned in 1938, Somei served as the department chair, and many department graduates were active in *kanten* (the government-supported exhibitions), such as Tsuneoka Bunki (1898–1979), Koizumi Seidō (1883–1945), Yazawa Gengetsu (1886–1952), and Kawasaki Shōko (1886–1977) and kept on its teaching staff. Yet, criticism ensued that this list paled before the major *zaiya* (anti- or non-*kanten*) artists who emerged during Taishō and early-Shōwa from the Japan Art Institute and other artists groups. Similar criticism arose against the departments of oil painting (formerly Western painting) and sculpture. Thus, toward the end of World War II, in 1944, the Ministry of Education decided to reshuffle the entire faculty. In the *Nihonga* department, five painters from the Japan Art Institute—Kobayashi Kokei, Yasuda Yukihiko, Okumura Togyū, Murata Deigyū (1903–1980), and Haneishi Kōji (1903–1988)—and one artist from *kanten*, Yamamoto Kyūjin, were installed and continued to teach until well after the war's end.

In 1949, under the National University Establishment Act, Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music (Tokyo Geijutsu Daigaku) was inaugurated as the only national arts university, merging the Tokyo School of Fine Arts and the Tokyo Music School (Tokyo Ongaku Gakkō, founded in 1887).

Today, Hirayama Ikuo, a graduate of the *Nihonga* department, serves as the university's president. The school of fine arts includes the departments of painting (*Nihonga* with three professorships, oil painting with six), sculpture, crafts, design, architecture, and aesthetics and art history; the student enrollment capacity is 920 with a full-time teaching staff of 96.

(Translated by Beth Katzoff/Reiko Tomii.)

Examples (*Tehon*) and Textbooks (*Kyōkasho*)

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This article examines educational materials employed at art schools from the 1880s to the turn of the century, using the examples of the Kyoto-Prefecture Painting School (Kyoto-fu Gagakkō) and the Tokyo School of Fine Arts (Tokyo Bijutsu Gakkō).

The Kyoto-Prefecture Painting School, the first art school in Japan to teach traditional and Western painting, opened in July 1880, four years after the foundation of the Technical Art School (Kōbu Bijutsu Gakkō), Japan's first government-run art school to teach Western art. According to the "Teaching Guide of Kyoto Painting School" (*Kyoto Gagakkō kyōsoku*), dated June 1880, the school's objectives were to "promote beauty in art and lay the proper foundations for various crafts."

At the time of its opening, Makimura Masanao (1834–1896), Governor of Kyoto Prefecture, named the prominent *nanga* master Tanomura Chokunyū (1814–1907), as School Principal. He also selected 43 painters as Appointees (*Shusshi*), including Kishi Chikudō, Kōno Bairei, Kunii Ōbun (1833–1887), Mori Kansai, Mochizuki Gyokusen (1834–1913), and Suzuki Hyakunen (1825–1891). The painting school established the four-denomination system—consisting of Eastern, Western, Southern, and Northern courses—thus including virtually all the styles and genres of painting practiced in Kyoto at the time. The "Painting School's Teaching Guide" (*Gagakkō kyōsoku*), dated June 1883, required students to attend classes for five hours per day; to progress a grade every half year from the sixth grade to the first grade; and to graduate after three years.

A school's curriculum and educational materials are the tools that achieve its educational ideals. At Kyoto's painting school, each denomination had its own curriculum determined by its teachers: for example, the Northern-course curriculum consisted of "brushwork" (*unpitsu*) that included vertical and horizontal lines; "simplified drawing" (*ryakuga*); "abbreviated drawing" (*genpitsu*); "ruler drawing" (*keie*) that included straight lines and patterns (*zumon*) drawn with rulers; "copying" (*rinmo*); "life drawing" (*shasei*); "composition" (*fuchi*); "coloring" (*fusai*); and "oral lessons" (*kōju*). "Brushwork" and "copying" were required at each grade. Little attention was given to general knowledge or cultural subjects.

It is Kōno Bairei who was responsible for the Northern-course curriculum and the preparation of its educational materials. He primarily drew on the Shijō-school *tehon*, or examples. In addition, he modified or adapted pictures taken from the *Mustard-Seed Garden Manual* (Kaishien gaden, or Jieziyuan Huazhuan), a painting manual compiled during the Chinese Qing period and highly regarded by Japanese *nanga* painters since the Edo period (and also used as a main source book for the Southern course). Bairei also selected appropriate examples from such Maruyama-school manuals as "How to Depict Human Figures" (*Jinbutsu byōsha zuhō*), compiled by Maruyama Ōkyo (1733–1795), the founder of Maruyama school. These selections reflected Bairei's own training in both Maruyama and Shijō schools as well as his study of *nanga*. The Northern-course materials that Bairei compiled were all hand-drawn with ink and brush; he used not only *tehon* prepared by teachers but also copies drawn by advanced student for their class assignments. Some titles of Bairei's *tehon* are known today: "Various Trees: Copies for *Rinmo*" (*Jumoku shohō rinmo mohon*), "Abbreviated Drawings of Flowers: Copies" (*Genpitsu gaki renpitsu mohon*), and "Sketchbook of Flora" (*Shokubutsu shaseichō*).

Overall, lessons in brushwork and copying were intended to teach students how to manipulate the hand to reproduce the effects provided in *tehon*. It was no different from the training given at *juku*, or the private teaching ateliers, that preceded and continued to exist side by side with the new educational system of the painting school.

A series of organizational and curricular changes took place at the school from 1888, when the old four-denomination system was abolished, to 1892 when a major revision of the teaching guide took place. After 1892, material based on the *Mustard-Seed Garden Manual* was no longer used. A new manual was compiled that included traditional works by Kanō Sanraku (1559–1635), Matsumura Keibun (1779–1843), and Yokoyama Kazan (Kishi/Shijō school, 1784–1837). This change reflected the emerging view that one should place greater emphasis on creating one's own *Nihonga*, rather than solely depend on the old models. The 1892 "Teaching Guide Outline" (*Kyōsoku tekiyō*) indeed declared that the school should "encourage [students] to discover their own aptitude and goal and guide them to express their own ideas and create their own designs." General subjects outside studio teaching such as history, morals (*shūshin*), and artistic anatomy were added. The curriculum was transformed and expanded to meet the increasing demand for a modern art school.

During the decade of Meiji 30s (1897–1906), at the Kyoto-City School of Arts and Crafts (Kyoto-shi Bijutsu Kōgei Gakkō; formerly the Kyoto-Prefecture Painting School), Takeuchi Seihō was the central figure among the reformist teachers who transformed the school's teaching principles. Although the teachers continued to use *tehon*, it played a less significant role in the overall curriculum. Traditional brushwork practice (*unpitsu*) was downgraded and greater emphasis was placed on *shasei* or "study from life." Seihō admonished students, "Don't imitate your teachers," which was completely opposite to the teaching of the traditional *juku*, where students were warned not to deviate from their master.

The Tokyo School of Fine Arts followed a somewhat different path. Authorized in October 1887, the school was founded following numerous discussions and the research of art policies in other countries conducted by Okakura Tenshin (1862–1913), Ernest Fenollosa (1853–1908), Kanō Tomonobu (1843–1912), and Hashimoto Gahō, all of whom played major roles at the Painting Research Division (Zuga Torishirabe Kakari) that preceded the school. The school's primary goal was best characterized by Tenshin's "natural progressionism" (*shizen hattatsu-shugi*), which may be summarized as the attempt to "actively develop [art], by drawing on the tradition of Japanese art and utilizing what is advantageous from Western art," as stated in his speech upon his return from his research trip to Europe, given at the meeting of Kanga-kai in December 1887.

In the beginning, the school's painting course (*kaiga-ka*) offered only lessons on traditional painting. Reflecting the nationalist tendency encouraged by Fenollosa, the painting course aimed at reviving traditional painting; thus it excluded Western painting as well as *nanga*, which Fenollosa and Tenshin blamed for corrupting Japanese painting. The school's painting curriculum consisted of a five-year course—the two-year general course (*futsū-ka*) which all students had to take and a three-year special painting course (*senshū-ka/kaiga-ka*).

The traditional *Nihonga* that Fenollosa and Tenshin conceived was based on the Kanō school, to which was added Kyoto's Maruyama-Shijō school. Fenollosa, who had studied painting under Kanō Eitoku (1814–1891) and was awarded the artist's name "Eitan," made Kanō teaching the educational foundation of the Tokyo School of Fine Arts. As was characteristic of other schools during the Edo period, the Kanō school heavily emphasized copying and the use of *tehon*. Kanō Hōgai who had assisted Fenollosa and Tenshin in preparing the school died right before its opening; he was replaced by Hashimoto Gahō, Hōgai's fellow Kanō-school painter. Other Kanō-school painters at the new school included Kanō Tomonobu and Yūki Masaaki (1834–1904); Kawabata Gyokushō of the Maruyama school and Kose Shōseki (1843–1919) of the Kishi school were invited from Kyoto.

Although subjects taught in the painting course varied over the years, the "Catalogue" (*Tokyo Bijutsu Gakkō ichiran*) for September 1890 through August 1891 offers a glimpse of the curriculum. The main subjects of the general course were "copying" (*ringa*) and "study from life" (*shasei*). The general course also included "making of forms" (*zōkei*), "drawing with instruments" (*yōki gahō*), science and mathematics, history, Japanese and Chinese literature, and physical exercise. The special painting course encompassed "copying" (*rinmo*) as well as "new conception" (*shin'an*), artistic anatomy, and aesthetics and art history.

Ringa copying is the study of brushwork through copying *tehon*. *Tehon* consisted of woodblocks of line drawings, with or without ink-shading, copied after ancient masterpieces, ranging from works by Kanō and Tosa masters to Chinese masterpieces of the Tang, Song, Yuan, and Ming dynasties as well as Western painting (including such religious themes as the Madonna). Examples of *ukiyo-e*, *bunjin-ga*, and *Rinpa* were strictly excluded. While the *ringa* copying taught the basics of drawing, coloring, and use of ink through copying woodblock examples, the *rinmo* copying of the special painting course allowed students to work mainly from very elaborate hand-drawn copies.

In this curriculum, students who built their fundamental skills through "copying" (both *rinmo* and *ringa*) were expected to gradually create original works of their own "new conception." Gahō mainly taught the *rinmo* copying and the "new design"; Tomonobu, the *ringa* copying for the general course; Gyokushō and Masaaki taught *shasei*; and Shōseki, coloring. It should be noted that Gyokushō and Shōseki later published several art textbooks: Shōseki's 22-volume compilation, *New Selections: Albums of Brush Painting* (Shinsen mōhitsu gajō), was published in 1900; Gyokushō wrote, among others, *New Album of Brush Painting* (Mōhitsu shingajō) in 1894 and *100 Painting Exercises* (Shūga hayku-dai) in 1898.

When painters trained at the Kyoto-Prefecture Painting School and the Tokyo School of Fine Arts showed their works side by side at an exhibition, the differences were noticeable. Kyoto graduates created clear and simple works that had superb technique; Tokyo painters tended to emphasize content and intention over technique.

(Translated by Reiko Tomii.)

Tokyo National Museum

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Japan's first museum was opened under the auspices of the Ministry of Education's Museum Bureau on March 10, 1872, at the Taiseiden pavilion in Yushima Seidō, a former center of Confucian learning erected by the Tokugawa government during the Edo period. Originally called simply "the Museum" (Hakubutsukan), or "the Ministry of Education's Museum" (Monbushō Hakubutsukan), over the following hundred and twenty years the museum would change its name to the Imperial Museum (Teikoku Hakubutsukan), the Imperial Household Museum (Teishitsu Hakubutsukan), the National Museum (Kokuritsu Hakubutsukan), and, finally, the Tokyo National Museum (Tokyo Kokuritsu Hakubutsukan), as it is known today.

The museum initially housed an exhibition of objects gathered by the Meiji Government for display at the Vienna International Exposition, a world's fair of 1873. During the nineteenth century, Western nations established many museums and held a series of international expositions to foster trade and acquaint the public with new knowledge and technology. Japan's participation in the Vienna Exposition was a major project of the government which was then concentrating all its energy on forming a modern nation, inspiring efforts by the heroic policy-slogans of "rich country, strong military" (*fukoku kyōhei*) and "increase production, promote industry" (*shokusan kōgyō*). The Exposition Secretariat (Hakurankai Jimukyoku) was accordingly placed under the direct control of the Dajōkan, an office comparable to a modern government ministry. Under the pretext of preparing for the Exposition, many works of art and domestic products were collected; a survey was also conducted of treasures belonging to ancient shrines and temples. In a short period of time, a great number of articles were amassed from around the country. Some were acquired from shrines and temples or venerable families, and others were newly commissioned from contemporary artists and craftsmen. In this way, in the process of preparing for the Exposition, the foundation of the museum collection was laid.

Early plans for the museum were ambitious. They envisioned a comprehensive museum complex of a natural history museum for natural and man-made items, zoological and botanical gardens for the cultivation of animals and useful plants, and a library containing ancient and modern books in Japanese and Chinese.

In 1873, the museum was incorporated into the Exposition Secretariat under the Dajōkan's jurisdiction and was relocated to the Secretariat's office on the site of a former clan estate at Uchiyamashita-chō, in the vicinity of the present-day Imperial Hotel in Tokyo. Although the grounds were vast (56,000 square meters), the Edo-period buildings they contained were inadequate as exhibition halls, even after repairs. Individual buildings were designated to display specific subjects: there were halls devoted to antique objects, animals, plants and minerals, agricultural exhibits, and foreign artifacts. Additional facilities included a breeding farm, a taxidermy workshop, auxiliary botanical gardens, and a greenhouse.

In 1875, when all efforts concerning the Vienna Exposition were brought to a close, jurisdiction of the museum was transferred to the Ministry of the Interior, which was then in charge of implementing the *shokusan kōgyō* policies. To accommodate dramatic increases in the number of objects displayed, existing galleries were remodeled and additional exhibition housing was constructed. While developing and expanding the museum staff and exhibits, the Ministry secured a piece of land at the former site of Kan'eiji Temple in Ueno Park to erect a new building for the museum. This land had been designated as the site of the first Domestic Industrial Exposition (*Naikoku kangyō hakurankai*), to be held in 1877. The Ministry commissioned the British architect Josiah Conder to design a brick building that could be used first as an exposition hall and then as a museum. (For the first Exposition, a preliminary building on the site served as the exhibition hall.) In December 1880, after three years of construction, a splendid two-story brick structure in the India-Islamic style with a total floor area of 4300 square meters was completed in time for the second Domestic Industrial Exposition the following March. Before the museum moved into the new building, its jurisdiction together with the Exposition Secretariat passed to the newly established Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce.

Another change occurred in 1886, when control of the museum was transferred to the Ministry of the Imperial Household, where it remained until 1947. It was renamed the Imperial Museum (Teikoku Hakubutsukan) in 1889. At the same time, two additional state museums were planned in Nara and Kyoto, which opened in 1895 and 1897 respectively. Since responsibilities for expositions remained with the Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce, the museum began to place a greater emphasis on the protection of important art and cultural properties. In 1900, under the Imperial Household Museum Act (*Teishitsu Bijutsukan kanrei*), it was renamed the Imperial Household Museum (Teishitsu Hakubutsukan) and began to focus on art and history.

In 1909, to commemorate the crown prince's wedding, a new exhibition hall called Hyōkeikan (literally, hall to express congratulations) was dedicated at the museum by the governor of the prefecture and the mayor of the city of Tokyo. Designed by Katayama Tōkuma (1854–1917), Conder's pupil and an engineer at the Ministry of the Imperial Household, the neo-Baroque Hyōkeikan was a fine example of late-Meiji Western-style architecture. (It was

designated an "important cultural property" [*jūyō bunkazai*] in 1978.) Because the new hall provided additional display space, the art department's exhibition of painting was greatly expanded.

During the Great Kantō Earthquake in 1923 the main building designed by Conder was badly damaged, although the Hyōkeikan survived intact. Consequently, a drastic divestment of the museum's collections took place, directing the museum more definitively to the areas of art and history. In 1924, the zoo was given to the city of Tokyo; in the following year, animal, plant, and mineral specimens were transferred to the Tokyo Museum (Tokyo Hakubutsukan; presently the National Science Museum [Kokuritsu Kagaku Hakubutsukan]) and other institutions.

By 1928, reconstruction of the museum's main structure was well under way with the establishment of a fund-raising committee. The committee also sponsored a national design competition for a new museum building that was won by the architect Watanabe Hitoshi (1887–1973). The new building, erected on the former site of the main building in November 1937 and dedicated by the Shōwa Emperor on November 10, 1938, was a two-story stone structure with an underground level, fire- and quake-proof, with a total floor area of 21,500 square meters. It was designed in the "Oriental style based upon Japanese taste" typical of imperial (*teikan*) style architecture of the early Shōwa years. Its inaugural exhibition presented more than 1800 masterpieces of ancient art from Japan and Asia, divided into the categories of "art" and "art crafts." These new divisions characterized the museum's evolution as an art museum rather than an art and history museum that consisted of the three categories of "history," "art," and "art crafts." In 1940, in the new building, the museum held the "Special Exhibition of the Imperial Household Shōsōin Collections," the first ever public showing of the Shōsōin treasures, which attracted some 400,000 people over a period of twenty days. In 1942, due to the intensifying war situation, the museum began to relocate its collections to Kyoto, Nara, and Fukushima. In March 1945, the devastating air raids on Tokyo forced the museum to close, although it did escape damage.

The museum did not reopen until March 24, 1946. On May 3, 1947, the same day the new Constitution was promulgated, the museum became a part of the Ministry of Education and was renamed the National Museum (Kokuritsu Hakubutsukan). In 1950, the newly established Cultural Properties Protection Committee (Bunkazai Hogo Iinkai), which would later become the Agency of Culture (Bunkachō), took control of the museum. In March 1952, it was given its present name, the Tokyo National Museum (Tokyo Kokuritsu Hakubutsukan); shortly thereafter, the Kyoto and Nara National Museums were also renamed.

In 1964, the Hōryūji Treasure Hall opened to exhibit treasures donated by the famous Hōryūji temple in Nara to the imperial household in 1879; these included excellent examples of Asuka- and Nara-period Buddhist sculptures and crafts along with ancient East Asian artworks. In the fall of 1968, the Eastern Hall was erected to exhibit East Asian arts; the entire main building was now devoted to exhibits of Japanese art, while the Hyōkeikan housed archeological artifacts. Currently, the museum's collections contain some 88,000 items, including 87 designated as "national treasures" (*kokuhō*) and 337 as "important cultural properties" (as of March 31, 1994).

The museum's collection of *Nihonga* dates back to its opening in 1872, but it did not begin to collect *yōga* until 1894. The majority of *Nihonga* works entered its collection during the Meiji period. Collections from the Taishō period were greatly expanded through the acquisition of Hara Sankei's (1868–1939) modern *Nihonga* collections in 1948. Currently, the museum has approximately 400 works of *Nihonga*, 150 *yōga*, 100 modern prints, and 100 watercolors and drawings as well as studies and copies dating from the post-Restoration era.

(Translated by Beth Katzoff/Reiko Tomii.)

Imperial Household Artists (*Teishitsu gigeiin*)

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In October 1889, the Ministry of the Imperial Household established the Imperial Household Artist system, a program through which the imperial household could provide protection and support to contemporary artists. After the Meiji Restoration, many artists whose livelihood had directly depended on the old regime, such as official painters to the shōgun and clan lords, lost their social and economic base. What supported them to some small degree was the encouragement of arts under the policy of "increase in production and promotion of industry" (*shokusan kōgyō*), the policy fundamentally tied to an idea of economic utilitarianism which resulted from the necessity to increase foreign exports. In this context, the Imperial Household Artist system aimed at protecting traditional arts in the new nation by updating the Tokugawa precedent of official painters (*goyō eshi*) while adopting the European model of court artists.

Behind the introduction of this system were the intense political maneuvers of two major forces in the art world, the New Faction (*Shinpa*) and the Old Faction (*Kyūha*). Both maintained close ties to the government power structure: Ernest Fenollosa (1853–1908) and Okakura Tenshin (1862–1913) of the New Faction were related to the Tokyo School of Fine Arts (Tokyo Bijutsu Gakkō, authorized in 1887) and the Ministry of Education; the Japan Art Association (Nihon Bijutsu Kyōkai, established in 1887) of the Old Faction was headed by a member of the royal family and closely connected to the Ministry of the Imperial Household. It is the Japan Art Association that was instrumental in realizing the Imperial Household Artist program.

In April 1888, Sano Tsunetami (1822–1902), the Association's president, made an appeal to the Imperial Household Minister for the protection and preferential treatment of artists and craftsmen; in June of that year, seventeen artists were appointed Craftsmen of the Ministry of the Imperial Household (*Kunaishō kōgeiin*). In February 1890, the first meeting was held to select Imperial Household Artists. The committee consisted of Kuki Ryūichi (1852–1931), Sano Tsunetami, Gejō Keikoku (1842–1920), Takamine Hideo (1854–1910), Hamao Arata (1849–1925), Yamataka Nobuakira (1840–1904), and members of the Ministry of the Imperial Household. The committee chair was Kuki, then director of the Imperial Museum, which had been established under the Ministry of Education in 1872 and transferred to the Ministry of the Imperial Household in 1886. Subsequent museum directors carried out the administrative work related to the artist program. It should be noted that not only those related to the Old Faction/Japan Art Association (Sano, Yamataka, and Gejō) but also those from the Ministry of Education (the committee chair Kuki, Takamine, and Hamao) who supported the cause of the New Faction, were both present at the first selection meeting, striking, as it were, a balance between the two competing forces.

In October 1890, ten artists comprised the first group of Imperial Household Artists: six *Nihonga* painters, Tazaki Sōun (1815–1898), Mori Kansai, Kanō Eitoku (1814–1891), Morizumi Tsurana (1809–1892), Hashimoto Gahō, and Shibata Zeshin (1807–1891, painter and lacquer artist); two wood sculptors, Takamura Kōun (1852–1934) and Ishikawa Kōmei (1852–1913); and two craftsmen, Date Yasuke (1839–1892), and Kanō Natsuo (1828–1898).

The stated objectives of the Imperial Household Artist program were to promote the country's arts, preserve old crafts and refine modern craftsmanship, and encourage younger generations. To achieve these goals, no more than twenty (later, 25) artists were to serve as Imperial Household Artists at one time. Upon appointment, the artists submitted one example of their work; in return, they would receive benefits including the 100-yen annual pension (an amount which remained the same until the system was abolished in 1945). They were also obliged to perform certain duties which included creating works for the Ministry of the Imperial Household on commission and providing reports to the Imperial Museum director. Since financial compensation for such commissions was minimal, appointment to the program was, in actuality, a highly prestigious token of gratitude to elderly artists for their past services to the imperial household.

A total of 79 artists were honored in thirteen series of appointments. 40 were appointed in the Meiji era, 13 in Taishō, and 26 in Shōwa. The last appointment was made in July 1944; the system was abolished after World War II, but titles remained effective until the recipients' deaths. The 79 appointees consisted of 36 *Nihonga* painters, 9 *yōga* painters, 7 sculptors, 24 craftsmen, 2 architects, and a photographer. *Nihonga* painters named after the first appointment include: Noguchi Yūkoku (1827–1898), Taki Katei (1830–1901), and Kōno Bairei (named in 1893); Kishi Chikudō, Yamana Tsurayoshi (1836–1902), and Kawabata Gyokushō (in 1896); Araki Kanpo (in 1900); Kumagai Naohiko (1828–1913), Mochizuki Gyokusen (1834–1913), Imao Keinen (1845–1924), and Noguchi Shōhin (1847–1917) (in 1904); Takeuchi Seihō (in 1913); Kobori Tomoto (1864–1931), Terasaki Kōgyō (1866–1919), Tomioka Tessai, Shimomura Kanzan, Kawai Gyokudō, and Yamamoto Shunkyo (in 1917); Yokoyama Taikan (in 1931); Hashimoto Kansetsu, Yasuda Yukihiko, and Kikuchi Keigetsu (in 1934); Komuro Suiun (1874–1945), Uemura Shōen, Matsubayashi Keigetsu (1876–1963), Kaburaki Kiyokata, Nishiyama Suishō (1879–1958), Kobayashi Kokei, Maeda Seison, and Dōmoto Inshō (in 1944).

This apportionment, the fact that the first *yōga* appointment of Kuroda Seiki (1866–1924) was made only in 1910, indicates the emphasis on traditional art and crafts. In terms

of affiliation, of the 17 *Nihonga* painters named during the Meiji period, 13 were members of the Japan Art Association, although Eitoku and Gahō, two of the first *Nihonga* honorees, were affiliated with the New Faction.

The significance of the new imperial patronage, however, extended beyond mere art policy or art-world politics. In fact, its introduction signalled the establishment of the imperial institution in the domain of the arts, along with the transfer of the Ministry of Education's museum to the jurisdiction of the Ministry of the Imperial Household in 1886 and the construction of the Meiji Imperial Palace that was completed in 1887. Especially pertinent is the Ministry's involvement in the protection of old art (by means of the museum) and contemporary art (through the Imperial Household Artist program) that may be understood as the preservation of "history" from the past to the present. This, in turn, was part of a broader endeavor dating from around the early 1880s to bring about the cultural unification of the modern nation of Japan under the imperial system, wherein "history" was used to legitimize the imperial family as the "source of honor." Thus old arts as well as old temples and shrines received protective care similar to that accorded to ancient castle remains, ancient battlefields, and other landmarks of historical interest. The protection of contemporary art, then, was equally relevant because contemporary artists were considered heirs to "history" and tradition.

The use of the Japanese word *gigei* for the title *Teishitsu gigeiin* (Imperial Household Artist) further indicates the preoccupation with the nation's "history" and aesthetic canon at the time. While the traditional term *gigei* encompasses all arts including crafts, the term *bijutsu* was newly coined during the Meiji era as a translation of the Western term "fine arts," and hierarchically placed above crafts. The appointment of more than a score of craftsmen eloquently bespeaks the idea behind the language.

In this context, it is interesting that Kuki, the chair of the first Imperial Household Artist selection committee as well as the director of the Imperial Museum, was a disciple of Fukuzawa Yukichi (1835–1901), whose treatises such as *On the Imperial Household* (Teishitsu-ron, 1882) and *On Imperial Leadership* (Dōō-ron, 1889) partly inspired the protection of "history" by the imperial household. Kuki most earnestly put into practice Fukuzawa's theories in the domain of the arts through his work at the museum protecting old art. One may be tempted to speculate that the higher national goal of cultural unification transcended the infighting of the New and Old Factions, when Kuki and the committee members gathered and selected the first group of Imperial Household Artists.

The art world changed by 1917, when the first few members of the Japan Art Institute (Nihon Bijutsu-in), the New Faction offshoot founded in 1898 and reorganized in 1914, were named Imperial Household Artists. The conflict between the two factions waned as the powerful Sano of the Old Faction passed away in 1902, followed by the influential Tenshin of the New Faction in 1913. With the inauguration of the annual Bunten (The Ministry of Education Art Exhibition; *Monbushō bijutsu tenrankai*) in 1907 the art world was shifting its attention to a new arena.

After the Ministry of Education established the Imperial Academy of Fine Arts (Teikoku Bijutsu-in) in 1919 and began to name its members, the Academy memberships increasingly assumed a position of honor. Quite a few artists were appointed as both Imperial Household Artists and Academy members. Until the end of World War II, the two programs coexisted as symbols of the highest honors in the art world.

(Translated by Hiroshi Nara/Reiko Tomii.)

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Nihonga and the Imperial Household

Hiroko T. McDermott

Since the 1870s the Japanese imperial household has played a vital role in the development of *Nihonga*. By acquiring some 1500 examples of this modern practice of traditional Japanese painting it has amassed one of the largest collections of its kind. But only now, more than a century later, has it become possible to discover how this collection was built and how its contents and character were shaped by the ways in which art objects entered imperial hands.

The *Nihonga* holdings, like other objects in the collection, were acquired by three principal means: gift, purchase, and commission. The first of these probably provided the least scope for a demonstration of "imperial taste," but was a custom that dated back to at least the fourteenth century. In the early Meiji period, this practice was still observed and the emperor received old Japanese paintings or Chinese brushes during his visits to the private residences of major political figures such as Ōkuma Shigenobu and Inoue Kaoru. By the late Meiji period contemporary works, especially *Nihonga*, had become a preferred type of gift, probably because there could be little question of authenticity. By the turn of the century, it became the established practice to present modern artworks to commemorate important events in the life of the imperial family, such as weddings, anniversaries and coronations. This custom peaked at the coronation of the Shōwa Emperor in 1928, when the Iwasaki family, the founders and owners of Mitsubishi, commissioned six pairs of screens by leading *Nihonga* painters, including Maeda Seison, Kawabata Ryūshi, and Kaburaki Kiyokata, for presentation to the imperial family.

Imperial visits to art exhibitions also prompted the offering of paintings. A few members would be chosen out of an exhibition group to paint gift works beforehand, or actually during an imperial visit, usually in a simple format like a fan or album leaf. In return, the royal guest usually made some cash contribution to the exhibiting group.

A much larger number of works of art, however, were acquired by outright purchase. Unlike his predecessors of the Tokugawa period (1600–1868), the Meiji Emperor was not confined to Kyoto and its environs. From the early 1870s well into the 1890s he made numerous excursions, long and short, to all parts of the country, as part of the government's conscious effort to model the imperial institution after European monarchies. Other members of his family also made frequent visits to industrial expositions and art exhibitions in Tokyo, Kyoto, and Osaka.

This public patronage began in the spring of 1872, with the emperor's visit to the first government-sponsored exhibition of art and industrial objects, mounted in Tokyo by the Museum Bureau in the Ministry of Education. During this and subsequent visits, the emperor was expected to purchase some display pieces and donate some money. Whether the Meiji Emperor was personally interested in visiting these art exhibitions or in selecting objects for purchase is hard to discern. Nor are we presently able to identify who actually determined such selections. Nevertheless, the public soon saw him as an important patron and protector of the national arts and art industry. Modern "imperial taste" began to have an influence beyond the imperial circle.

The imperial household began to purchase *Nihonga* in 1877, at the first Domestic Industrial Exposition (*Naikoku kangyō hakurankai*) in Tokyo. Some *yōga* paintings were also purchased. However, from that year until 1907, only *Nihonga* was purchased by the imperial household at such government-sponsored exhibitions. This may be because *yōga* was excluded from some of these exhibitions, but this preference also reflected, and paralleled, the government's support of *Nihonga* rather than *yōga* during this period.

Aside from government-sponsored exhibitions, the imperial family most frequently visited and made its largest purchases at the regular exhibitions of the Japan Art Association (Nihon Bijutsu Kyōkai). In the three decades following 1888, more than 1,000 examples of *Nihonga*, in addition to applied art, were purchased. The preeminence of the Association was predictable, since it was the first large and private artists group of *Nihonga* and art crafts. This organization also had a close tie with the imperial family established under its earlier identity as Ryūchi-kai. Prince Arisugawa Taruhito (1835–1895), the emperor's distant uncle, had assumed Ryūchi-kai's governorship in 1883 and continued to hold the post after its reorganization in 1887. A series of grand visits and large purchases were made by the imperial family during the period of 1889–1891, coinciding with the promulgation of the country's first constitution and the convening of the first Imperial Diet. Thus, the monarch of the new constitutional state was crowned the most important art patron of the nation.

During the 1890s the imperial family purchased an average of forty to fifty items of *Nihonga* a year at the Japan Art Association's regular exhibitions. At the dawn of this century, however, this number fell off, just as the imperial purchase of art objects in general did, due to the war with Russia. And when the Bunten, the new annual art exhibition sponsored and managed by the Ministry of Education, was established in 1907, the imperial household appears to have changed the goal of its art purchases. Never again did it purchase a large quantity of art at a single exhibition or of any art group, as it had at the Japan Art Association. Henceforce, the intention was to lay the foundation of a high-quality collection of contemporary work. In other words, the imperial family had begun to evolve from a patron to a collector.

The imperial family also made purchases at exhibitions of the Kyoto New and Old Art Exhibition (*Kyoto shinko bijutsukai*) from 1887. At the transition from the Meiji to the Taishō (1912–1926) reign, its favor was extended to a wider range of *Nihonga* art organizations, such as the Tatsumi Painting Society (Tatsumi Gakai), Jitsugetsu-kai, Nihonga-kai, and the Meiji Painting Society (Meiji Gakai). Only a few groups of *yōga* painters, such as the Meiji Art Society (Meiji Bijutsu-kai) and, after 1911, the Pacific Painting Society (Taiheiyō Gakai), and Kōfū-kai, enjoyed such attention. As a whole, *yōga* purchases remained far below those of *Nihonga*.

The third, and arguably most prestigious, means of entry into the imperial household collection was by commission. From the early Meiji period the imperial household often marked special state and private occasions by commissioning art works. Quite a number of *yōga* paintings were produced for portrait or documentary purposes, particularly in the first half of the Meiji period. *Nihonga* was chosen more often for ritual purposes (e.g., the screens used at the coronation ceremony), occasional gifts, or simply interior decoration.

In 1889 a new imperial patronage system was initiated. Henceforth until 1945, the imperial household had as many as 20 to 25 artists holding appointments as Imperial Household Artists (*Teishitsu gigeiin*). In return for a small, but lifelong, pension, each artist was expected to present an example of his or her work to the imperial household upon appointment, and more at a later commission. Among the 79 artists accorded this honor between 1890 and 1944, 36 were *Nihonga*, as opposed to only 9 *yōga*, masters. The first *yōga* appointment came as late as 1910, and the other 8 only in the 1930–1945 war years.

Nihonga was also favored as the interior decoration style for the imperial palaces. Originally designed as a Western building during the Westernization craze of the Rokumeikan period of the 1880s, the new Imperial Palace was completed in 1888 in a traditional Japanese architectural style, with some quasi-Western features in the official reception rooms. This preference for "Japanese taste" reflected the government leaders' concern over the nation's cultural identity in the 1880s. This is also evident in the interior design of the Akasaka Detached Palace. Constructed during the early 1900s on the model of Versailles, this residence for the Crown Prince held *Nihonga* paintings and cloisonné wall decorations designed by *Nihonga* painters, amidst the splendor of imported French interior furnishings.

What then has become of all the *Nihonga* presented to, purchased, or commissioned by the imperial household? The little we know suggests a complicated answer. Quite a few paintings were apparently given away on various state and private occasions. Some were perhaps destroyed by air raids during the war. But a considerable number, along with other modern works, remained in the hands of the imperial family until recently. The *Nihonga* collection did not suffer the political changes at the end of the war that forced the family to relinquish much of its art collection, such as the Shōsōin treasures and the holdings of the two Imperial Household Museums of Tokyo and Nara.

It was only after the death of the Shōwa Emperor in 1989 that the imperial collection's *Nihonga*, as well as its *yōga* and modern art crafts, became somewhat available for exhibition and publication. Approximately 3,200 items (some 7,000 pieces) of art and crafts, premodern and modern, were presented to the state. Today, this 1989 imperial bequest, including presumably several hundred items of *Nihonga*, is kept in the Museum of the Imperial Collections (Sannomaru Shōzōkan), a new storehouse with limited exhibition facilities within the moat of the imperial palace. Slowly, all too slowly, this collection is gaining the attention it merits.

"Bunten" and the Government-Sponsored Exhibitions (*Kanten*)

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On October 25, 1907, the Ministry of Education Art Exhibition (*Monbushō bijutsu tenrankai*) was inaugurated at the Tokyo Industrial Exposition Art Gallery (Tokyo Kangyō Hakurankai Bijutsukan) in Ueno Park. This juried exhibition, commonly called by its abbreviated name "Bunten," consisted of three divisions: the first division for *Nihonga*, the second for *yōga* or Western-style painting, and the third for sculpture.

The history leading to the establishment of the Bunten is recounted by Masaki Naohiko (1862–1940) in his memoir published in 1937. A statesman deeply involved in Japan's cultural bureaucracy, particularly in arts education and arts administration, Masaki began a survey of arts facilities and education systems in various Western countries at the end of 1899. During his visit to Vienna in 1900, he met with Makino Nobuaki (1861–1949), Japan's ambassador to Austria. Masaki found Makino extremely interested in the arts and knowledgeable about art systems in Europe. In their meeting, Makino specifically impressed upon Masaki and two other officials from the Ministry of Education the idea that the Ministry should sponsor exhibitions like the French Salons. In 1906, when the Saionji cabinet was formed and Makino was named its Education Minister, Masaki and others proposed that the Ministry should establish a government-sponsored exhibition as they had discussed in Vienna. Coincidentally, the artist Viscount Kuroda Seiki (1866–1924), Imperial University professor Ōtsuka Yasuji, and others also recommended that the government establish an organization to promote art on a permanent basis. Encouraged by this support, the new Education Minister decided to establish a Ministry of Education art exhibition.

The presence of Prime Minister Saionji Kinmochi (1849–1940) may well have greatly influenced the course of events, for he had studied in France in his youth and was well versed in art matters. Further, after the modernization of Japan had been carried out under such policy-slogans as "increase production, promote industry" (*shokusan kōgyō*) and "rich country, strong military" (*fukoku kyōhei*), the national government as well as the art world became increasingly aware of the need to modernize the arts in the areas of art education and arts administration.

The creation of the Bunten in this context was significant on three counts:

1. Within the government, the administration of art shifted from the area of industries and exports to that concerning education and cultural affairs; and the Ministry of Education clearly manifested its intention to consolidate the art world.
2. The Bunten attracted large audiences every year and received frequent press coverage, thus popularizing and enhancing the social recognition of art. (According to the *History of Nitten* published by the Nitten Foundation, 43,741 people visited the first Bunten; 258,471 visited the final or twelfth Bunten in 1918.)
3. Acceptance to the Bunten and the reception of Bunten prizes conferred social prestige on artists; and the Bunten itself reigned over the art world as a form of academicism.

How, then, did the various changes surrounding the arts that took place in the government, society, and the art world affect *Nihonga*? The *Nihonga* world, during the Meiji 30s (1897–1906), saw the "rivalling forces" among the art organizations—such as the Japan Art Institute (Nihon Bijutsu-in) and the Japan Painting Association (Nihon Kaiga Kyōkai)—compete one against another. A similar factionalism was also prevalent in the world of *yōga*, or Western-style painting. Matsumoto Matatarō (1865–1943), a psychologist who was also a keen art-world observer, provided an insightful account on how such "rivalry" changed *Nihonga* itself in his 1927 study, *Contemporary Nihonga* (Gendai no Nihonga):

> A diverse array of painting societies (*gakai*) were organized around 1897. They did not necessarily consist of painters of the same schools (*ryūha*), rather they were gatherings of painters who shared some interest. An examination of any given group's exhibition reveals that the paintings of relative excellence become a standard of some sort, in terms of concept as well as technique, prompting imitations among its members.... And stylistic crossbreeding developed. As a result, the distinction among schools became less clear, prompting schools of comparatively similar styles to join together in order to survive. Consequently, the age of inter-school rivalry finally ended... and thus began inter-group competitions in the painting world.

In the age of modern art organizations, as traditional schools lost their relevance, the painters themselves began to reconsider the painting called *Nihonga* through their creative process, while society at large also demanded such a review. In a sense, the very identity of *Nihonga* as traditional painting became an issue: *Nihonga* that would transcend the traditional school distinctions had to be defined in terms of materials, vision, and styles, distinct from another form of painting called *yōga*. Yet the actual course of events tended toward more factionalism among painting societies. In this respect, the Bunten was conceived as a place where various art organizations should come together and overcome factionalism.

Contrary to this initial intention, the establishment of the Bunten in 1907 made factionalism all the more fierce, for the selection of the jury, the acceptance and rejection of entries, and the awarding of prizes became further sources of conten-

tion. Although attempts were made expressly to avoid inter-group or regional—that is, Tokyo vs. Kyoto—contests when the *Nihonga* jury was selected, not all the groups involved were pleased: the disgruntled Japan Art Association (Nihon Bijutsu Kyōkai) and the so-called Old Faction (*Kyūha*) founded the Authentic Fellowship Society (Seiha Dōshi-kai) which refused to participate in the Bunten and organized a separate exhibition. Conversely, the New Faction (*Shinpa*) led by Okakura Tenshin (1862–1913) rallied various groups including the Japan Art Institute (Nihon Bijutsu-in) and formed the Society for the Refinement of National Painting (Kokuga Gyokusei-kai).

By the following year, when the second Bunten was held, a new cabinet, and thus a new education minister, were in place; some members of the House of Peers, who constituted the core group of the Japan Art Association, schemed to introduce six Old Faction painters to the Bunten jury. This led to a reversal of events: now the Society for the Refinement of National Painting, that is, the New Faction group, held an exhibition separate from the Bunten that year. This kind of art-world infighting left the unfortunate impression that the jury process was not entirely impartial. Eventually, at the time of the sixth Bunten in 1912, the first division was further divided into two, with the first section representing the Old Faction and the second representing the New Faction. The jury and the prize system were accordingly split into two sections. However, since that division presented an ever-sharpening contrast between the New and the Old groups, the two-section program was abolished at the seventh Bunten.

The Japan Art Institute, which had lost its leader with the death of Tenshin, was reorganized in 1914 by Yokoyama Taikan and Shimomura Kanzan. The reorganized Institute exerted a significant influence as one of the major *zaiya* groups—that is, the groups outside *kanten* (government-sponsored exhibitions)—in the *Nihonga* world during the Taishō and Shōwa periods. The Association for the Creation of National Painting (Kokuga Sōsaku Kyōkai), founded in Kyoto by the younger painters dissatisfied with the Bunten, was another notable *zaiya* group of *Nihonga*. In the *yōga* world, progressive painters demanded the establishment of a second *yōga* section in the Bunten and, upon the Ministry of Education's rejection, formed the Nika-kai (literally "Second Section Society") in 1914. The appearance of these *zaiya* groups vis-a-vis the *kanten*'s role as an academy or an umbrella body for the art establishment signalled a new composition within the art world, a structure which continued in essence until the end of the government-sponsored exhibitions after World War II.

When surveying the works of *Nihonga*, *yōga*, or sculpture that won prizes at the *kanten*, one begins to wonder whether this system produced the kind of works that deserve to be called standards of academicism. Even though the *kanten* artists filled the exhibition halls with their ambitious large-scale works year after year, these works mostly represented moderate tendencies within the art world. Their *kanten* records—acceptance by *kanten*, winning prizes, and appointment to the jury—primarily affected the artists' ranking within the art-world hierarchy. Few ground-breaking works materialized from the *kanten* system; on the other hand, many innovative works emerged from the exhibitions of the *zaiya* groups.

After the twelfth exhibition was held in 1918, the Bunten was reorganized and renamed as the Exhibition of the Imperial Academy of Fine Arts (*Teikoku Bijutsu-in tenrankai*) or "Teiten" in 1919, in yet another effort to consolidate the art world. In 1937, the Teiten was renamed Shin-Bunten (New Bunten), when its jurisdiction was transferred back to the Ministry of Education, and lasted until 1943. After World War II, the *kanten* was reincarnated as the Japan Art Exhibition (*Nihon bijutsu tenrankai*) or "Nitten," although its principal sponsorship was now assumed by the Japan Arts Academy (Nihon Geijutsu-in). In 1958, its sponsorship was taken over by the Nitten Foundation, which virtually concluded the history of the *kanten*, or government-sponsored exhibitions in Japan.

(Translated by Martha J. McClintock/Reiko Tomii.)

The Imperial Academy of Fine Arts

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The Imperial Academy of Fine Arts (Teikoku Bijutsu-in), established in 1919, was similar in function to the art academy in the West. Its history—not only its foundation but also its series of reorganizations—was intimately linked to *kanten*, or the government-sponsored exhibitions that began with the Bunten (The Ministry of Education Art Exhibition; *Monbushō bijutsu tenrankai*). In turn, the Bunten, and the Academy as well, played a part in Japan's efforts to establish the country as a modern nation. While the national government implemented the policy of "increasing production and promoting industry" (*shokusan kōgyō*) to create the "rich country, strong army" (*fukoku kyōhei*), it also sought to create systems to foster art, and at the same time, oversee the art world.

Prior to 1919, there were a few attempts to establish an art academy. Around 1899, two *yōga* painters, Kuroda Seiki (1866–1924) and Matsuoka Hisashi (1862–1944), made a proposal seemingly in collaboration with officials of the Ministry of Education. Then again in 1900, the council of the Meiji Art Society (Meiji Bijutsu-kai), a group of *yōga* painters including Koyama Shōtarō (1857–1916) and Matsuoka, submitted "An Opinion on the Protection and Promotion of Art" to the fourteenth Imperial Diet. This position paper, which was not acted upon, called for the establishment of an advisory board or a research committee consisting of art experts and scholars and the creation of a national art museum to collect and exhibit artworks, both Eastern and Western, ancient and modern.

In 1907, the Ministry of Education decided to sponsor an art exhibition (Bunten) as a part of its efforts to unify the often factious art world and encourage younger talents. The Ministry instituted the Art Jury Committee Act in June of that year in preparation for the first exhibition. Under the Act, the art jury committee, charged to judge works submitted to the Bunten, was placed under the jurisdiction of the Education Minister and chaired by the Vice Minister. The tenure of jury members was three years. This committee prefigured the future Imperial Academy of Fine Arts.

After issuing the exhibition bylaws and selecting jury members from various schools (*ryūha*), the Ministry opened the first Bunten exhibition in November 1907. However, the jury committee, which was intended to impartially review artworks and to promote art, became a battleground of fierce factionalism. Further, entering the Taishō era (1912–1926), the Bunten began to lose its all-encompassing character as it lost the artists who represented the major factions to such splinter groups as the Reorganized Japan Art Institute (Saikō Nihon Bijutsu-in) of *Nihonga*, the Second Section Society (Nika-kai) of *yōga*, and the Association for the Creation of National Painting (Kokuga Sōsaku Kyōkai) of Kyoto. Rampant favoritism also compromised the process of jury appointments and the awarding of prizes that required strict impartiality. At the same time, there emerged a tendency among *Nihonga* painters to "outfit works for the Bunten" without regard for artistic concerns. Strong criticisms were voiced not only in art journalism but also in the general press toward the end of Bunten's existence.

In 1918, the Bunten was terminated after its twelfth exhibition; in the following year, the Imperial Academy of Fine Arts was established in order to reform the government-sponsored exhibition system and carry out art promotion measures. The Imperial Academy bylaws, announced in September 1919, designated the Education Minister to oversee the Academy as had been the case with the former art jury committee; the Academy took over the task of organizing the annual exhibition from the Ministry of Education, instituting the Exhibition of the Imperial Academy of Fine Arts (*Teikoku Bijutsu-in tenrankai*) or "Teiten." It was also authorized to advise the Minister and present him with proposals on important matters concerning art.

The Academy's president and members were appointed by the cabinet upon the Education Minister's recommendation and under imperial directive. The first president was Mori Ōgai, the prominent novelist. The original members included Kobori Tomoto (1864–1931), Kawai Gyokudō, Takeuchi Seihō, Yamamoto Shunkyo, Tomioka Tessai, Matsumoto Fūko (1840–1923), and Imao Keinen (1845–1924) of *Nihonga*; Kuroda Seiki, Okada Saburōsuke (1869–1939), Wada Eisaku (1874–1959), and Nakamura Fusetsu (1866–1943) of *yōga*; and sculptors Takamura Kōun (1852–1934) and Shinkai Taketarō (1868–1927). The second president was Kuroda Seiki, succeeded by the bureaucrat Fukuhara Ryōjirō (1868–1932), and then by the influential art administrator Masaki Naohiko (1862–1940). The number of members was increased to 20 in 1925, to 25 in 1928, and finally to 30 in 1930.

With elder artists, most of whom were formerly on the Bunten jury, elevated to Academy membership, mid-career artists began to fill posts on the Teiten jury, breathing new life into the government-sponsored exhibition. An attempt was also made, in vain, to unify the art world by bringing the *zaiya* groups (groups outside the government-sponsored exhibition) in line with the Teiten. Such leading *zaiya* painters as Yokoyama Taikan and Shimomura Kanzan of the Japan Art Institute were invited to join the Academy, but they refused to cooperate.

In addition to the Academy's sponsorship of the annual Teiten exhibition, it also managed the Art Research Institute (Bijutsu Kenkyūjo) in 1930 when the Kuroda Memorial Hall, established in commemoration of Kuroda Seiki who had died in 1924, was bequeathed to the Academy. In 1932, the Art Research Institute began the compilation of the art

history of the Meiji and Taishō eras with contributions of the *Asahi* newspaper company which promised the yearly sum of 5,000 yen over five years. (The Art Research Institute was later transferred to the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education; after World War II, it became a part of the Tokyo National Research Institute of Cultural Properties [Tokyo Kokuritsu Bunkazai Kenkyūjo].)

By its fifteenth exhibition, however, it developed another artistic impasse—too many works were accepted as *mukansa*, that is, "outside the jury process"—and the exhibition suffered heavy criticism. In the meantime, the political atmosphere in Japan had turned increasingly nationalistic, particularly after the Manchurian Incident of 1931. Education Minister Matsuda Genji (1875–1936), in an effort to place the entire art world under government control, introduced the infamous Matsuda reform of the Academy and the Teiten in 1935. The Academy, greatly expanded to a total membership of fifty, added twenty new members including Yokoyama Taikan, Yasuda Yukihiko, Maeda Seison, Kobayashi Kokei, Tomita Keisen, and Kawabata Ryūshi from the major *zaiya* groups of *Nihonga*.

Since this reform was planned without the knowledge of the arttists, especially the former Academy members, it incited a great deal of resentment among the artists formerly affiliated with the Teiten, upset the *zaiya* groups, and generally threw the entire art world into sheer chaos. Within the *Nihonga* division of the Teiten, the new regulations concerning exhibition membership and the treatment of *mukansa* works offended many artists. Most of the Kyoto artists who were led by Takeuchi Seihō who proposed yet another reform, and many Tokyo-based artists who had previously enjoyed the preferential treatment of *mukansa* status, boycotted the first exhibition after the reform in 1936. The exhibition almost resembled an exhibition of the Japan Art Institute. When a further reform of the reformed Academy was introduced by Matsuda's successor Hirao Hachisaburō (1866–1945) the same year, more than ten Academy members who had supported Matsuda's reform—including Gyokudō, Taikan, Yukihiko, Kokei, Seison, and Keisen as well as Kaburaki Kiyokata, Hashimoto Kansetsu, and Kikuchi Keigetsu—left the Academy.

This confusion was finally brought under control by the formation of the Imperial Arts Academy (Teikoku Geijutsu-in) in 1937. Unlike the Imperial Academy of Fine Arts, the new Academy consisted of the president and eighty members in various fields of the arts, ranging from the visual arts to music, literature, and theater. Overseen by the Education Minister, the Academy was expected to review important issues related to the arts, and advise and make recommendations to the Education Minister. Membership was an honor accorded to individuals highly regarded in their respective fields. The reorganized and expanded Academy successfully contained the factious and dissatisfied art world within a larger realm of the arts, with Taikan, Yukihiko, Kokei, and others who had resigned from the Academy the previous year now coming into the fold. In this sense, a hierarchy of the entire art world was established with the new Academy at its pinnacle.

Since the responsibility of organizing the annual exhibition was removed from the new Imperial Arts Academy, the Ministry of Education again assumed sponsorship. The Teiten was reorganized and renamed the Ministry of Education Art Exhibition, now called Shin-Bunten (New Bunten) to differentiate it from the earlier Bunten.

After World War II, in keeping with Japan's postwar democratization, the Imperial Arts Academy was renamed the Japan Arts Academy (Nihon Geijutsu-in) in 1947. It consisted of one president and 100 members from three areas: visual arts; literature; and music, theater, and dance. It sponsored the Japan Art Exhibition (*Nihon bijutsu tenrankai*) or "Nitten"—the postwar successor of the Shin-Bunten—in 1948, and co-sponsored the Nitten with the Nitten Committee from 1949 until 1958, when the Nitten Foundation began to assume sole sponsorship. Today, the Academy functions as an honorary institution which confers support upon those artists who have achieved excellence and made great contributions to the nation's culture.

(Translated by Martha J. McClintock/Reiko Tomii.)

Okakura Tenshin and *Nihonga*

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When European painting was gradually introduced to Japan in the latter half of the Edo period (1600–1868), the Japanese were fascinated by the power of its realism. When Japanese artists studied the methods of realism (perspective and *chiaroscuro*) and attempted to adopt them in their practice, two options developed. One was to abandon the familiar Japanese techniques altogether and study European painting techniques. Takahashi Yuichi (1828–1894) is among the oil painters who took this direction in the early Meiji. This was the birth of *yōga* (Western-style painting), a genre of painting developed in modern Japan and modeled after the ideas and techniques of Western painting, which still practiced today.

Nihonga is the genre that developed in the second direction, diametrically opposed to that of *yōga*. *Nihonga* primarily refers to a type of painting handed down in Japan from ancient times; it is painted with *sumi* ink and/or pigments applied by brush on silk or paper. It was developed from Chinese and Korean painting and generally has been regarded as embodying the Eastern tradition in its essence. However, after the encounter with European painting, *Nihonga* painters tried to adapt some of its techniques to *Nihonga*. Toward the end of the Edo period, many Japanese painters actively pursued this path of adaptation: Maruyama Ōkyo (1733–1795) of Kyoto and Watanabe Kazan (1793–1841) of Edo (present-day Tokyo) represent this effort made on the individual level.

When the Meiji government was formed in 1868 and announced its first policy of *bunmei kaika* (to encourage "civilization and enlightenment"), Japan experienced a major change. The study of Western art became a project of the state. The Technical Art School (Kōbu Bijutsu Gakkō) was founded in 1876. As the first national art school in Japan, it clearly reflected the grave contradiction that characterized Japan's project of modernization. The school was founded under the Ministry of Industry (Kōbushō) on the rather utilitarian premise that mastery of European art was one of the skills useful for the modernization of industry. The ministry then invited as a teacher Antonio Fontanesi (1818–1882), an Italian landscape painter of the Barbizon school, in order to promote industrial art.

In the 1880s, the nationalist movement surfaced, questioning the hasty implementation of the Westernization policies. The Meiji government also began to reevaluate Japan's unique cultural values. The Technical Art School was abolished in 1883, and in 1885, the Ministry of Education decided to establish another national art school. Among the members of the preparatory committee of the new school were Ernest Fenollosa (1853–1908) and Okakura Tenshin (1862–1913).

The relationship between Fenollosa and Tenshin was that of teacher and student. Fenollosa, a Harvard graduate, was invited to teach at Tokyo University in 1878. While teaching political science and philosophy at the university, he ardently collected old art. Eventually, he was convinced that Japanese art maintained unique values unparalleled in the world. Fenollosa criticized the state of contemporary art trapped in the mere imitation of European art. Advocating the revival of Japanese classic tradition, he resigned Tokyo Imperial University and became an advisor to the organization that promoted the revival movement. Having excelled in English from his childhood, Tenshin served as Fenollosa's interpreter and absorbed and assimilated his mentor's ideas.

Before the opening of the school, Tenshin and Fenollosa travelled around Europe and America to survey the situation of art schools there. They concluded that "Japan has nothing to learn from European and American art or art schools." With the nationalists rallying against the Europeanists within the Meiji government, the former seized leadership at the new national art academy, the Tokyo School of Fine Arts (Tokyo Bijutsu Gakkō). At the time of its opening in 1889, all courses were devoted to traditional art and crafts. Paradoxically, the Tokyo Music School, which started a year before the art school, taught nothing but European music; no teacher was appointed to teach traditional music. It was a complete opposite to the art school that excluded European art, and illustrates yet another contradiction brought about by the Meiji government in modernizing Japanese culture.

Among many traditional schools of *Nihonga*, Fenollosa singled out the Kanō school as the standard of Japanese classics, finding his ideal collaborator in Kanō Hōgai. Hōgai taught Fenollosa about *Nihonga*, and Fenollosa in turn imparted his ideas for new painting to Hōgai; Fenollosa went so far as to import French pigments for Hōgai. However, right before the opening of the art school, Hōgai, whom Fenollosa intended to install as chief instructor, died from an illness. Hashimoto Gahō was instead chosen to assume Hōgai's position, although Gahō was neither as ambitious nor enthusiastic about *Nihonga* reform as his late colleague.

After Hōgai's death, Fenollosa went back to America, with Tenshin left behind to govern the school. Unlike Fenollosa, Tenshin sought broader foundations for the new *Nihonga* in the belief that the flexible application of European painting techniques to *Nihonga* along with various traditional ideas and techniques would ultimately lead to a painting style suitable to the new age.

Tenshin developed a collaborative educational partnership with Gahō who put Tenshin's ideas into practice through his teaching. Under the tutelage of Gahō and Tenshin emerged young painters, most notably Yokoyama Taikan, Hishida Shunsō, and Shimomura Kanzan.

Meanwhile, the Europeanists increased their power base at the school. With the foundation of the European painting

department in 1896, the painting courses were split into two sections, marking the beginning of the parallel existence of *Nihonga* and *yōga* in the Japanese art world. Two years later, Tenshin was forced to quit the position of headmaster as well as all his positions of public office, including curator of the Imperial Museum. Tenshin and his painter-colleagues and disciples quickly regained their footing when they established a private art research institute, the Japan Art Institute (Nihon Bijutsu-in) in 1898. Although the Institute initially attracted attention as a private "research organization trying to create a new Japanese painting" in opposition to the national art school, the general art public began to lose their interest in the Institute.

The expressive power of *Nihonga* lies in the brushwork line in *sumi* ink that can achieve a variety of expressions. It was believed that the beauty and power of brushwork was the essence of *Nihonga*. However, young painters of the Institute such as Hishida Shunsō and Yokoyama Taikan experimented with a method which did not conform to the traditional linear brushwork, preferring the heightened color effects accompanied by compositional depth and expansiveness. Yet, their creative and ambitious effort was not understood and branded as a mere eclecticism of *Nihonga* and *yōga*.

Already in 1896, Tenshin claimed that "oil painting, if done by a Japanese, is *Nihonga*," seeing no difference between *Nihonga* and *yōga*. Shunsō, in 1910, also stated that "the time will definitely come—though it may not be any time soon—when oil painting and watercolor, currently called *yōga*, and our *Nihonga* should all be considered as *Nihonga*, conceived in the minds and created by the hands of Japanese people." During the period of fifteen years that separated Tenshin's and Shunsō's words, the first national salon, Bunten (The Ministry of Education Art Exhibition; *Monbushō bijutsu tenrankai*), was organized in 1907, with *yōga* and *Nihonga* placed and judged in different sections. A decade after Tenshin's statement, the distinction between the two genres was institutionalized even more firmly.

Works by the Institute painters did not sell well, bringing the Institute's finances to the verge of bankruptcy in 1904. Around then, Tenshin went to America to take a post as advisor of the Oriental department at Boston's Museum of Fine Arts. From then until his death in the fall of 1913, Tenshin spent half his time in Japan and the rest in the United States, investing only half of his former enthusiasm in the "movement to create a new *Nihonga*" in Japan. Shunsō made his statement in an attempt to achieve his mentor's goal, when Tenshin's efforts to create new *Nihonga* had been defeated; however, Shunsō died prematurely at 37 in 1911, soon followed by Tenshin.

A year after Tenshin's death, Yokoyama Taikan and Shimomura Kanzan revived the Japan Art Institute. The reorganized Institute developed more smoothly than the earlier Institute. Today, its exhibition is called "Inten" and exerts significant influence on *Nihonga* painters. The painters of the restored Institute such as Taikan viewed themselves as the legitimate successors of Tenshin's ideal. But is it really the case?

The Institute's success may be primarily attributed to the fact that Taikan and others distinguished *Nihonga* from *yōga* as two different genres, seeking the former's characteristics in features precisely opposite to the latter. In this sense, they realized only half of the ideal set forth by Tenshin and Shunsō. Although Tenshin's credo, "*Yōga* painted by Japanese is *Nihonga*," may appear to pose a nationalist tenet, it should be noted that his words in reality express a desire to locate a universality in painting by eliminating the distinction between *yōga* and *Nihonga*. In a sense, the reorganized Institute tried to further the "Japan-ness"—i.e., the national character in a narrower sense—of *Nihonga*.

The *Nihonga* that Tenshin endeavored to develop did not materialize after all. The institutionalized separation of *yōga* and *Nihonga* and their parallel existence are imbedded in today's art system. Yet, within this system, *Nihonga*, which is still believed to represent Japanese painting, is almost indistinguishable from *yōga* in its subjects and/or techniques. It could be argued that Tenshin and the young painters of the Japan Art Institute inadvertently achieved their goal.

(Translated by Sumiko Obata/Reiko Tomii.)

The Japan Art Institute

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The Japan Art Institute (Nihon Bijutsu-in), established in 1898, is an art organization that has continued to the present, in spite of a brief period of inactivity toward the end of Meiji. Its advocacy for a new type of *Nihonga* makes it one of the important bases of *Nihonga* development.

The foundation of the Japan Art Institute resulted from the intricate art politics in Tokyo, where the national government's cultural policies exerted an immediate and inevitable influence on the state of art. Toward the end of the 1880s, a major fault line emerged in Tokyo's painting world between the New Faction (*Shinpa*)—the lineage that stemmed from Kanga-kai founded in 1884 and was succeeded by the Japan Art Institute via the early years of the Tokyo School of Fine Arts—and the Old Faction (*Kyūha*), of which the major force was Ryūchi-kai founded in 1878 and reconstituted as the Japan Art Association (Nihon Bijutsu Kyōkai) in 1887. The New Faction denounced the Old Faction as a group of traditionalists perpetuating the formalized styles rooted in Tokugawa-era painting, while intently positing itself as an innovating force in *Nihonga*.

The New Faction was guided by its two main theorists: Ernest Fenollosa (1853–1908), the government-employed American philosopher who became an influential aesthete and founder of Kanga-kai; and Okakura Tenshin (1862–1913), the American's student and interpreter who played a crucial role in the establishment of the Institute. When Fenollosa returned to Boston in 1890, Tenshin became head of the Tokyo School of Fine Arts which opened in 1889 and the Japan Young Painters' Association (Nihon Seinen Kaiga Kyōkai) established in 1891.

The Japan Young Painters' Association was founded by about a dozen painters, including Terasaki Kōgyō (1866–1919) and Kobori Tomoto (1864–1931), whose primary affiliation was with the Old Faction's Japan Art Association. Yet, interestingly, they invited Tenshin, the New Faction's leader, to serve as their president (*kaitō*). Tenshin maintained more of an observer's role, leaving all the operational affairs to the key members, until 1896 when he took the decisive measure of re-instituting the association as the Japan Painting Association (Nihon Kaiga Kyōkai). By this time, coincidentally, Tenshin's school had sent out its first group of graduates—notably Yokoyama Taikan, Shimomura Kanzan, and Hishida Shunsō—who were in need of a forum to show their ambitious new *Nihonga* works. Thus, Tenshin, an astute politician, secured for his students an ideal arena in the form of the new Association's biannual exhibitions.

Tenshin's campaign to create a new kind of *Nihonga* gained recognition and appeared to be in full force. However, in March 1898 the so-called Tokyo School of Fine Arts incident compelled Tenshin to resign and his group to leave. Tenshin thus lost his institutional footing, along with the 32 artist-instructors who followed him, including Hashimoto Gahō, Taikan, Kanzan, Shunsō, Kōgyō, and Tomoto.

In October of that year, Tenshin and 26 artists who left the school established the Japan Art Institute at Yanaka Hatsune-chō in Tokyo. They were given substantial financial assistance from a wealthy doctor from Boston, William S. Bigelow (1850–1926), with whom Tenshin and Fenollosa had made numerous trips to Nara and Kyoto to survey art and architecture.

The Institute was conceived as an informal graduate center comparable to Western institutions. Its statement of foundation reads: "Our Institute's project rests on painting and sculpture, and also encompasses design and practice of various crafts ranging from architectural decoration to metal carving, hammered metal, and cast metal, from lacquer, ceramics, and embroidery to photography and printmaking. Our facilities will consist of three sections: research, production, and exhibition...."

The Institute immediately made its presence known through its exhibition activity: In the month of its foundation, the Institute organized its first exhibition in conjunction with the fifth competitive exhibition of the Tenshin-led Japan Painting Association; thereafter, the joint exhibition was biannually organized in spring and fall until 1903, the year before Tenshin left for Boston. The Institute also circulated its exhibitions, which showed an average of several hundred works, to various cities outside Tokyo.

The Institute's programs of production and research were carried out by two sections. The First Section, in charge of the production of painting and crafts, was set up in the Yanaka Hatsune-chō facility. The Second Section, concerned with preservation and conservation technology, was set up in Nara. Beginning its substantial operation in 1901, it primarily undertook conservation of Buddhist statues. Later, during the Shōwa era, when its management was well established, the Second Section formed a separate entity, called the Nara Art Institute (Nara Bijutsu-in).

At the First Section, which became the center of the Institute's activities, the members focused on creating new *Nihonga* based on Tenshin's principles. It also published a journal, *Nihon bijutsu* (Japanese Art), to foster appreciation of *Nihonga*. It was Taikan and Shunsō, among the members, who achieved the distinctive style, aspiring to fuse tradition and individuality in painting. In response to Tenshin's challenge that *Nihonga* should express light and air, which Western painting successfully attained, the two developed the lineless drawing technique. Kanzan, Kimura Buzan (1876–1942), and Saigō Kogetsu (1873–1912) followed the two in practicing the new technique. However, their innovation was harshly disparaged as *mōrō-tai*, or "hazy style," from around 1901; the criticism ultimately and undeniably

endangered the Institute's management.

In addition to this criticism, Tenshin's travel to India and his appointment at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, as well as the foreign travels of the three major members (Taikan, Shunsō, and Kanzan) rendered the Japan Art Institute virtually inactive. By 1906, due to serious financial difficulty, the Institute along with the three painters and Buzan relocated to the countryside of Izura in Ibaraki Prefecture. It was the legendary Izura period, a time of the Institute's hiatus; however, some members soon found themselves participating in the government-sponsored exhibition, Bunten (The Ministry of Education Art Exhibition; *Monbushō bijutsu tenrankai*), founded in 1907.

Upon Tenshin's death in 1913, the idea of reviving the Institute increasingly gathered momentum. Partly incorporating the plan to found the Free Painting Research Institute (Jiyū Kaiga Kenkyūjo) that Taikan and Kosugi Hōan, the *yōga* painter, had developed, the Reorganized Japan Art Institute (Saikō Nihon Bijutsu-in) was established in Tokyo in September of 1914 to carry out Tenshin's goals of preserving and developing Eastern arts. The initial body of artist-members consisted of Taikan, Kanzan, Buzan, Hōan, Yasuda Yukihiko, and Imamura Shikō, who were aided by administrators such as Tatsuzawa Nobujirō (1865–1931), Sasagawa Rinpū (1870–1949), and Saitō Ryūzō (1875–1961). Its annual exhibition, commonly referred to as "Saikō Inten" (the abbreviation of "Reorganized Institute's Exhibition") in the beginning and later called simply "Inten," was inaugurated a month later in October and became one of several prominent *zaiya* (anti-official salon) exhibitions, along with Nika-kai (Second Section Society) of *yōga* founded in 1914.

The reorganized Institute stated its philosophy in three principles that read:

1. Japan Art Institute will re-establish its research facility in order to develop the arts of new Japan.
2. Its primary objective is free research. Thus, there are no teachers, only seniors; no teaching, only research.
3. It will draw no distinction between *Nihonga* and *yōga* as has been previously done; nor will it separate Japanese and Western sculpture.

Significantly, the reorganized Institute, the original body of which constituted the New Faction, declared it would not separate *Nihonga* and *yōga*, but encompass both under the label of "painting." Unlike other art organizations which tended to specialize in *Nihonga*, *yōga*, or sculpture, the reorganized Institute uniquely included sections of *yōga* and sculpture as well as *Nihonga*. (The *yōga* section, led by Hōan, who became increasingly interested in *Nihonga*, later splintered from the Institute in 1920; the sculpture section was terminated in 1961.)

From this point on, the Japan Art Institute was a major force in *Nihonga* circles. It embraced second-generation artists such as Imamura Shikō, Hayami Gyoshū, Yasuda Yukihiko, and Maeda Seison, encouraging them to experiment freely with fusing Western realism (*shajitsu*) and Eastern decoration and providing them exhibition opportunities, through Inten, to test their work's validity. As its membership grew and its prestige increased, the Institute tended to function as an inclusive national exhibition society of *Nihonga* artists joined by artists outside Tokyo such as Osaka's Kitano Tsunetomi and Kyoto's Tomita Keisen. Although it did not proscribe members' outside activities—Shikō and Gyoshū founded the Sekiyō-kai group in 1914—certain artists, such as Kawabata Ryūshi, left to form separate organizations.

In the postwar years, Inten continued to function as a major national exhibition. While prewar-generation members like Yukihiko, Seison, and Katayama Nanpū, demonstrated their ever-growing creativity, younger members, such as Kataoka Tamako, Ogura Yuki, and Okumura Togyū digested Western painting to the extent that their work appeared almost indistinguishable from oil painting in terms of both techniques and materials.

Given the numerous difficulties experienced by the Japan Art Institute, it is surprising that this art organization has managed to survive over such a long time. Undoubtedly, it is due to the fact that it has steadily upheld Tenshin's ideals, never lost sight of its strong spiritualism (*seishin-shugi*), maintained its historical awareness, and aspired to a higher ground.

(Translated by Ted Mack/Reiko Tomii.)

Takeuchi Seihō and the Kyoto Painting Circle

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Kyoto gadan, or the Kyoto Painting Circle, is the term applied to the modern *Nihonga* of Kyoto. A thousand-year-long imperial residency in the ancient capital helped develop a highly sophisticated culture, which in turn attracted and nurtured fine artists and craftsmen in the scenic basin sheltered by delicately sloping mountains. Even after the Meiji Restoration in 1868, when the imperial household moved to Tokyo, Kyoto continued to be a fertile setting for art, although it was profoundly altered by the challenges of the new age.

The Kyoto Painting Circle evolved within the complex art environment defined by the modern, government art schools and traditional private *juku* (teaching ateliers) based on the master-disciple relationship. The modern system of *kanten*, or government-supported exhibitions, functioned as the official arena in which Kyoto painters competed with artists nationwide. This environment fostered some remarkable characters, most prominently the artist, educator, and art-politician Takeuchi Seihō. Indeed, as one of the key players within the new art world, Seihō was *the* symbol of the Kyoto Painting Circle.

While the national government pressed the country forward to catch up with Western industrial countries after its long period of isolation, Kyoto's government also sought its own path of modernization. In order to aid traditional industries to produce and export crafts pleasing to Western tastes, the local government founded the Kyoto-Prefecture Painting School (Kyoto-fu Gagakkō) to educate painter-craftsmen (*gakō*) and artisans in 1880. It was the first painting school authorized by the Ministry of Education.

The establishment of the new school was a harbinger of the modern Kyoto Painting Circle, although the school in its outset reflected the still tradition-bound state of Kyoto's painting world at the time. Among the first group of teachers was Kōno Bairei, the revered master of Maruyama-Shijō school and Seihō's master, who taught many Kyoto artists, both at the school and privately.

It was the American philosopher, Ernest Fenollosa (1853–1908), who inspired Kyoto's *Nihonga* painters toward renovation and innovation of the medium. Initially invited to lecture on philosophy and political science at Tokyo Imperial University, he became an active proponent of *Nihonga* in Tokyo, because he feared that *Nihonga* would be compromised by Western painting in the tide of modernization. He visited Kyoto to survey the collections of old temples and shrines in 1884 and 1886. Both times, Fenollosa gave lectures at Nakamurarō at Gion. He gained mention in the local *Hinode shinbun* (Sunrise Paper) on the second occasion through his condemnation of the tradition-bound ways of *Nihonga*, his advocacy of a "true *Nihonga*" that should transcend the old schools, the time, and even nationality, and his call for spirituality in painting.

Fenollosa's provocative ideas prompted Bairei and others to establish the Kyoto Young Painters' Study Group (Kyoto Seinen Kaiga Kenkyūkai) for those younger than thirty in 1886. In 1891, it was the young artists themselves, including Bairei's pupil Seihō, who founded the Kyoto Young Painters' Competitive Exhibition (*Kyoto seinen kaiga kyōshinkai*). Kyoto's younger painters assertively showed their achievements in Tokyo as well, notably at the exhibitions of the Japan Art Association (Nihon Bijutsu Kyōkai): following their elders Mori Kansai and Kōno Bairei, Kansai's student, Yamamoto Shunkyo, along with Bairei's pupils, Takeuchi Seihō, Kikuchi Hōbun (1862–1918), Kawai Gyokudō, and Uemura Shōen, all won prizes.

The younger generation artists enlivened Kyoto's painting scene, while building on the older generation's accomplishments. Hōbun, Seihō, Taniguchi Kōkyō (1864–1915), and Tsuji Kakō, dubbed Bairei's "Four Guardians" (*Shitennō*), established themselves early on. They in turn became influential teachers themselves: Kikuchi Keigetsu studied under Hōbun, Tsuchida Bakusen under Seihō, Tomita Keisen under Kakō—all of whom became fine painters. Seihō, in particular, attracted many students such as Shōen, who had also studied with Bairei, and Nishimura Goun, a former disciple of Chikudō.

In 1895, after his master Bairei's death, Seihō was appointed instructor at the Kyoto Municipal School of Arts and Crafts (Kyoto Shiritsu Bijutsu Kōgei Gakkō; formerly the Kyoto-Prefecture Painting School). In 1900, Seihō received funds to attend the Paris Exposition; having long been interested in European art, he travelled extensively in Europe from August to February of the next year. By the time of his return, he was firmly convinced that Japanese painters should overcome *Nihonga*'s shortcomings through adopting such characteristics of Western painting as the use of light and color, emphasis on realism, and the "logical progression" from realism to *shai* (expression of the essence).

Seihō immediately put his observations into practice, "as vigorously as the rising sun" as described by contemporaries: his 1901 *Lions* (Shishi) depicted the actual animals he had seen at the zoo with uncompromising, true-to-life realism. The following year saw Seihō create major exhibition-works in the traditional screen format but with Western landscape subjects, such as Roman ruins and a Dutch windmill. Seihō therein revealed a completely new horizon unknown to *Nihonga* before by choosing Western subjects, employing realism based on drawings from life, applying Western perspective and shading, and effectively emphasizing the subject through his use of blank space characteristic of Eastern painting.

Inspired by Seihō's innovations, young artists like Ono

Chikkyō, Hashimoto Kansetsu, and Tsuchida Bakusen joined Seihō's private study group Chikujō-kai (literally, Bamboo-Cane Society). In 1907, when the Bunten (The Ministry of Education Art Exhibtions; *Monbushō bijutsu tenrankai*), an annual open-competition exhibition, was founded, Seihō was invited to serve as one of the judges representing Kyoto. The work he exhibited there fulfilled people's expectations and enhanced his standing further. Tokuoka Shinsen, Kanashima Keika (1892–1974), and Ikeda Yōson began to study with Seihō after the first Bunten.

In 1909, the municipality of Kyoto founded the Kyoto Municipal Special School of Painting (Kyoto Shiritsu Kaiga Senmon Gakkō) to give advanced training to *Nihonga* painters. Seihō was asked to become a full-time teacher (*sennin kyōyu*) of the intended school. Irie Hakō, Sakakibara Shihō, and Murakami Kagaku were among the first class to study with Seihō and graduate from the school; Bakusen and Chikkyō enrolled in the adjunct course (*bekka*), studying with Seihō at the school as well as at his private *juku*. Many leading artists who constituted the succeeding generation of the Kyoto Painting Circle studied with Seihō one way or another and were influenced by him.

Seihō's teaching incorporated what he had learned from Western painting:

1. *Nihonga* is too removed from reality. Therefore *Nihonga* painters should spend more time drawing from life.
2. Atmosphere in Western painting is dense, with a clear differentiation of light and shadow. *Nihonga* painters should explore ways to adapt these effects to express Japanese light.
3. In Western painting and sculpture, brushstrokes or impasto reveal the artist's spirit. *Nihonga* also has its unique brushstrokes which painters should seek to exploit.
4. Painters should pay more attention to realism and work from life; at the same time they should try to transcend mere objectivity.

Seihō himself continued to experiment with such genres as figure, landscape, animal, and *kachō* painting, which stimulated the younger artists and provided fine examples for them to emulate. His curiosity and willingness to experiment lay the groundwork and served as a catalyst for later developments.

Seihō's pupils, Bakusen, Chikkyō, Shihō, Kagaku, and others, who were a generation younger than their teacher, were more broadly trained and less bound by tradition. This made them feel close to modern Western paintings by such artists as Gauguin and Cézanne; vocal and conscious proponents of *Nihonga* for the new age, they were on the threshold of turning Seihō's brand of new sensibility into more individualistic, bold styles. Increasingly feeling confined by the Bunten that was bound by the old styles and sensibility, they established the Association for the Creation of National Painting (Kokuga Sōsaku Kyōkai) in 1918, signalling a new development in the Kyoto Painting Circle. Although it was not easy for them to break from the government exhibition with which their master was closely affiliated, Seihō encouraged his reluctant pupils to take the necessary step and agreed to serve as consultant to the newly established association.

Around this time, the Bunten came under attack: its judging and selection criteria were unclear, and its organization unsatisfactory. In 1919, the Ministry of Education reconstituted Bunten under the new name of Teiten (Exhibition of the Imperial Academy of Fine Arts; *Teikoku Bijutsu-in tenrankai*). The ministry elevated Seihō and other regular judges of Bunten to the positions within the Imperial Academy of Fine Arts (Teikoku Bijutsu-in), effectively removing them from judging duties. Instead it appointed Kikuchi Keigetsu, Hashimoto Kansetsu, Nishiyama Suishō (1879–1958), Kawamura Manshū (1880–1942) and others as new judges, in an attempt at reorganization. Painters such as Dōmoto Inshō, Fukuda Heihachirō, Tokuoka Shinsen, Yamaguchi Kayō (1899–1984), Ikeda Yōson, and Uemura Shōkō (Shōen's son; b.1902)—those who would become active members of the Kyoto Painting Circle—first made their names at the newly instituted Teiten. Most of them had studied under Seihō at the Special School of Painting and, after graduation, at his private *juku*.

The lineage of the Kyoto Painting Circle from Bairei to Seihō to his disciples continued that of the Maruyama-Shijō school. Drawing on their heritage, Kyoto artists also learned from Western painting and revisited the works of Chinese masters. While intently pursuing realism, they also sought to express an affinity with nature—characteristic of the ancient Japanese culture—in nature's subtlety and seasonal aspects. The Kyoto Painting Circle continued to embody the quintessentially traditional culture of Kyoto.

(Translated by Reiko Tomii.)

The Association for the Creation of National Painting

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The Association for the Creation of National Painting (Kokuga Sōsaku Kyōkai) was founded in January 1918 by five Kyoto *Nihonga* artists, Murakami Kagaku, Nonagase Banka (1889–1964), Ono Chikkyō, Sakakibara Shihō, and Tsuchida Bakusen; all were emerging artists of around thirty years of age. The founding of the Association was directly motivated by the rejection of Kagaku and Chikkyō's entries to the 1917 Bunten (the Ministry of Education Art Exhibition; *Monbushō bijutsu tenrankai*), after their works had won the special awards (*tokusen*) in the previous year's exhibition. In addition, works by Shihō and Bakusen, which received high acclaim while on view, did not win any awards. United by their shared dissatisfaction with the favoritism of the old-fashioned Bunten judges, they decided to separate from the Bunten system and create a forum in which they could freely pursue *Nihonga* as a form of modern painting.

All five artists belonged to the first class of students at the Kyoto Municipal Special School of Painting (Kyoto Shiritsu Kaiga Senmon Gakkō) that had opened in 1909. Kagaku and Shihō, who had graduated from the Kyoto Municipal School of Arts and Crafts (Kyoto Shiritsu Bijutsu Kōgei Gakkō), entered the regular course (*honka*). Banka, Chikkyō, and Bakusen, who had been trained at private *juku*, entered the adjunct course (*bekka*), which consisted solely of studio practices with no academic course requirement. Since there was little interaction between the two courses, it was not until four or five years after their graduation in 1911 that these five painters became friends. Their fresh sensitivities pulled them closer together.

During the period leading to the Association's foundation, Kyoto saw increasingly visible moves toward *Nihonga* as an art of the new era. The art historian Tanaka Kisaku (1885–1945), who had started his career as an artist and would later become an art historian, had recently returned from France played an important role, introducing new ideas of art from the West. A group formed around Tanaka and Nakai Sōtarō (1879–1966), the instructor of aesthetics and art history at the Special School of Painting; they organized lectures and exhibition critiques, attracting a great number of emerging painters. Nakai was also active among the circle of young students under Fukada Yasukazu, the graduate of the Tokyo Imperial University who had been brought to the Kyoto Imperial University as its first aesthetics teacher in 1910.

At the end of 1910, a discussion group called Le Chat Noir was formed under the guidance of Tanaka by Bakusen, Chikkyō, Hata Teruo (1887–1945), and other emerging *Nihonga* painters as well as the young *yōga* painters trained at the Kansai Art Institute (Kansai Bijutsu-in). Primarily interested in Post-Impressionism, the group attempted to organize exhibitions as a showcase for their studies. However, the members could not agree on the issue of a jury, and the group disbanded. From this group, Bakusen and Chikkyō, joined by the *yōga* painters Arai Kin'ya (1884–1966), Kuroda Jūtarō (1887–1970), and Tanaka Zennosuke (1889–1946), established another group called Le Masque, again under Tanaka's guidance. Le Masque's annual exhibitions, held in 1911 and 1912, revealed the members' strong attraction to Post-Impressionism.

A few years later, around the time that the future members of the Association were forming their friendship, a study group called Mitsuritsu-kai was formed by graduates of the School of Arts and Crafts and the Special School of Painting. A considerable number from this group would later participate in the Association's exhibitions and become full or associate members. There were also other lively movements among young *Nihonga* painters. These artists felt alienated from the antiquated Kyoto painting establishment that overemphasized techniques and lacked a sense of actuality. It is also important to note that the humanism of *Shirakaba* (White Birch)—the progressive literary magazine founded in 1910 to introduce current European art—led younger Kyoto painters to believe that a new *Nihonga*, one that would allow the assertion of the self, was possible.

In 1918, the Association for the Creation of National Painting made its debut, issuing a manifesto that began with the proclamation: "That which is born is art; art cannot be made by the system." Its earnest words expressed the founding members' call for freedom of creation and respect for individuality. The manifesto provided an inspiration to young *Nihonga* painters in Kyoto who found it a clear expression of their own search.

The Association instituted its annual exhibition as an ideal place for the introduction of new works. First held in Tokyo and then travelling to Kyoto later that year, the inaugural exhibition presented a total of 21 works: the five members displayed one work each, nine works were selected from 278 works submitted by nonmembers, and seven additional works were selected as "runners-up" (*sengai*) which were considered too good to be omitted. The exhibition was very well received, with a great deal of attention paid to the works by the five members. The distinctly Western influences made an especially strong impression on visitors: Chikkyō's reverence for Cézanne, Banka's intense palette reflecting his admiration for Gauguin, Shihō's two-fold study of Chinese Song- and Yuan-dynasty painting and Western-style modeling. Especially notable were works by Bakusen and Kagaku that incorporated both Eastern and Western sources. Bakusen revived the grand *Yamato-e* tradition while yearning for the sensuous beauty of Renoir; Kagaku's appreciation of Blake and Giotto resonated with symbolic ideals derived from his study of Heian-period

Buddhist paintings.

The Association bestowed its Kokuga (National Painting) award on Irie Hakō for his exhibited work, *Temptation* (Gōma), and made him a member. Hakō, a classmate of Kagaku and Shihō at the Special School of Painting, had been invited to become a founding member. He declined the invitation because he felt he had almost no experience with art organizations. Instead, he submitted as a general applicant to the exhibition his powerful work inspired by the Ajanta murals and Kamakura-era *Yamato-e*.

The Association, accepted wholeheartedly by the public, held a total of seven exhibitions over the course of its ten-year existence that ended in 1928. All exhibitions appeared in both Tokyo and Kyoto; a few travelled to Osaka as well. In 1921, Bakusen, Chikkyō, and Banka visited France, followed by Hakō in 1922. (They were not joined by Kagaku, due to the health reasons, and Shihō because of a death in the family.) This caused a three-year hiatus in the Association's activities, dividing the Association's history into two periods. In the earlier period, especially, each member passionately and without any restraint demonstrated his own creative belief through his works.

The Association resumed its exhibition program in 1924. This fourth exhibition put the Association into considerable debt, so the members painted works for general sale to make up the losses. In an effort to revitalize the Association, they invited Umehara Ryūzaburō (1888–1986) and Kawashima Riichirō (1886–1971) to establish a second division for *yōga* that was introduced with the fifth exhibition. They also added new members to the *Nihonga* division, including Itō Sōhaku (1896–1945), Kainoshō Tadaoto (1894–1978), Kayukawa Shinji (1896–1949), Okamura Utarō (1899–1971), Sakakibara Shikō (1895–1969; Shihō's brother), Sugita Yūjirō (1900–1984), and Suita Sōboku (1890–1983). There were subtle differences in opinion among the founding members on these changes. Around this time Murakami Kagaku began to have doubts about displaying his work in a competitive exhibition format and stopped submitting works by the fifth exhibition. Hakō did not participate in the sixth exhibition, indicating a further unravelling of the group's unity. The Association then undertook another expansion, inviting the sculptor Kaneko Kuheiji (1895–1968) and the potter Tomimoto Kenkichi (1886–1963) to join the second division.

After the Association's seventh exhibition was held in the spring of 1928, the first division disbanded that July. The second division continued under the name of Kokuga-kai. The major reasons behind the dissolution were financial problems and the complexity of the group's management that hampered the realization of their ideal, the free creation of art. After the group disbanded, Chikkyō and Bakusen exhibited works in the Teiten (Exhibition of the Imperial Academy of Fine Arts; *Teikoku Bijutsu-in tenrankai*). Kagaku, who had left Kyoto, pursued his creative activities in solitude in Kobe, and Shihō and Banka severed their relationships with the art world. Hakō concentrated on copying antique paintings. Other members and participants in the Association's exhibitions banded together in a new group, Shinju-sha, which lasted only a short while. A small number among the Shinju-sha affiliates then found their place at the Teiten and the Japan Art Institute (Nihon Bijutsu-in). The majority of them disappeared. Sudden changes accompanied the late-Taishō social backlash and a deepening economic recession did not afford these young painters enough time to develop their own individual arts.

It is significant that the Association was formed in Kyoto after the Japan Art Institute reorganization in 1914 led to the defection of the powerful New Faction from the Bunten. In 1919, the Bunten was reformed as the Teiten and began to accept works that showed new trends. The Association's espousal of art that expressed an individual's creativity had an impact far beyond the Kyoto art world; its energy and will provided incalculable spiritual support to young painters throughout the nation.

(Translated by J. Martha McClintock.)

Bijin-ga

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Bijin-ga is a genre painting unique to *Nihonga*; some examples are closer to portraiture, others to history painting. Since the term *bijin*, or "beauty," is quite vague, it is difficult to precisely define *bijin-ga*. One definition given by Kawakita Michiaki (b.1914), art historian, perhaps best describes it: "*Bijin-ga* may be said to capture female beauty—universal and accessible to everybody—by observing those particular aspects of life which most sharply reflect the day and thus change from time to time."

Bijin-ga reaches back to as early as the Nara period in the form of "beauty under the tree" (*juka bijin zu*), the most famous example of which is the screen preserved at Shōsōin. In the mid-Heian era (10th–11th century), "slit eyes and hooked noses" (*hikime kagibana*), a pictorial convention for depicting female features, was employed in portrayals of aristocratic life, as best exemplified by the scroll of the *Tale of Genji*.

However, the immediate origin of modern *bijin-ga* can be found in genre painting that became popular during the Momoyama and early Edo periods (mid-16th to mid-17th century). It was a time when a new samurai class, emerging from the ranks of farmers and common people, and an affluent urban merchant class that accumulated wealth through foreign trade, asserted themselves as major political and economic forces. These new power classes found the most fitting outlets for their free, if vulgar, energy in leisure pursuits and theater; and the best vehicle to express their aesthetics was genre painting depicting their leisure activities.

The kind of genre painting the new classes favored evolved over the period of a century. Early examples include screens, such as *Rakuchū rakugai zu*, that show a bird's-eye view of samurai and common people enjoying themselves in prosperous Kyoto and its environs. They were followed by screens, including *Matsuura Screen* and *Hikone Screen*, that focus on figures and costumes rather than activities, by representing fewer people in a larger scale, or showing interior scenes. During the Kanbun years (1661–1673), the standing courtesans and beauties called *Kanbun bijin* were created.

After *Kanbun bijin*, the lineage of *bijin-ga* was maintained primarily by *ukiyo-e* artists. *Ukiyo-e* woodblocks, said to have been originated by Hishikawa Moronobu (1618–1694), were an easily mass-produced form of art accessible to the common people. Featuring actors of Kabuki, the fashionable entertainment of the time, as well as courtesans of the Yoshiwara and other pleasure quarters, *ukiyo-e* enjoyed great popularity throughout the Edo period. Moronobu was followed by Suzuki Harunobu (1725–1770), the first master of *nishiki-e*, the newly invented multi-colored woodblock; and then by a group of painters—Isoda Koryūsai (fl. mid-18th century), Katsukawa Shunshō (1726–1793), and Torii Kiyonaga (1752–1815)—who invented a new form of female beauty, standing figures of slender women called *ukiyo-e bijin*.

The Kansei years (1789–1801) were *ukiyo-e*'s golden age in Edo (present-day Tokyo) with masters such as Kitagawa Utamaro (1753–1806), who created *ōkubi-e* (large-head portraits) that depicted only the upper body of a woman or an actor against a simplified background, Chōbunsai Eishi (1756–1829), and Katsukawa Shunchō (late 18 century). Utamaro, in particular, established the female type called "Utamaro *bijin*" which is still appreciated today.

In Kamigata (Kyoto and Osaka), where the subject of *bijin* was a favorite among the commoner class, if not as popular as in Edo, the painting schools of Maruyama and Shijō which emerged in the late-Edo, captured the citizenry's attention. Although they specialized in the subjects of landscape and birds-and-flowers, Maruyama-Shijō painters also produced many refined examples of *bijin-ga*. In addition to the Maruyama-school founder Maruyama Ōkyo (1733–1795), the artists Watanabe Nangaku (1767–1813), Nagasawa Rosetsu (1755–1799), Komai Genki (1847–1897), Nagayama Kōin (1765–1849), and Okamoto Toyohiko (1773–1845) excelled in the genre. Gion Seitoku (late 18th–19th century) also painted very unusual courtesans. Uemura Shōen, the modern master of *bijin-ga*, may be placed in this lineage of Kyoto *bijin-ga* painters.

After the Meiji Restoration, when the introduction of copper-plate prints, lithography, and Western wood-engraving stimulated the publication of illustrated newspapers and weekly magazines in various places, painters as well as *ukiyo-e* artists were employed as illustrators. Those active in the field included Tsukioka Yoshitoshi (1839–1892), Kobayashi Kiyochika (1847–1915), Ogata Gekkō (1859–1920), Mizuno Toshikata (1866–1908), Watanabe Seitei, Kajita Hanko (1870–1917), and Terasaki Kōgyō (1866–1919). Kaburaki Kiyokata, later hailed as the Eastern master of *bijin-ga* (while Uemura Shōen of Kyoto was the Western master), was a pupil of the *ukiyo-e* artist Mizuno Toshikata and also started as an illustrator.

Out of the heyday of illustration into the Meiji 30s (1897–1906), two *Nihonga* painters, Terasaki Kōgyō and Kajita Hanko began to produce original works of *bijin-ga*. Their women, often depicted in modern settings and costumes, are much closer to Western portraiture of women. By 1907, when the first government-sponsored exhibition, Bunten (The Ministry of Education Art Exhibition; *Monbushō bijutsu tenrankai*), was instituted, the place of *bijin-ga* in *Nihonga* was firm; the period of the Bunten, and later Teiten (Exhibition of the Imperial Academy of Fine Arts; *Teikoku Bijutsu-in tenrankai*) formed the golden age of *bijin-ga*.

Kajita Hanko, progressive-minded and critical of the conservative tendency of contemporary painting, attracted many young talented painters, such as Kobayashi Kokei, Maeda Seison, and Okumura Togyū. The fact that Kokei painted many women—indeed, an unexpectedly large number of works inspired by *ukiyo-e*—may have something to do with his master Hanko. Hanko influenced not only painters of the Japan Art Institute (Nihon Bijutsu-in) but also Kaburaki Kiyokata who echoed Hanko's romantic expression. In addition to his deep interest in Edo sentiment symbolized by *ukiyo-e*, Kiyokata demonstrated a romantic literary taste and sometimes sentimental expression, seemingly influenced by Western literature, while giving his figures a penetrating sense of interiority.

Among Kiyokata's students, Itō Shinsui (1898–1972) and Terashima Shimei (1892–1975) were good *bijin-ga* painters. Shinsui considered himself an heir to the *ukiyo-e* tradition, believing it his mission to depict contemporary genre scenes. He sometimes suffered the criticism that his subjects were too ordinary; however, Shinsui's work delighted the contemporary masses through its sense of vivid sensuality and profound reality. In the case of Shimei, his work was stylized almost to the extent that sensuality began to attain reality. Although Shimei painted *maiko* and young women—standard models of beauty—he demonstrated his true gift when depicting the interior life of lower-class prostitutes and middle-aged women.

The modernization of *Nihonga* in Kyoto was undertaken by painters from the Maruyama-Shijō school. From the disciples of the two central figures, Kōno Bairei and his pupil Takeuchi Seihō, emerged Uemura Shōen, the most established master of modern *bijin-ga*. The world of Shōen embraced female lives of the late Edo to early Meiji periods; in her later works on Noh subjects, she also depicted figures of the Heian to early Edo periods. However, she firmly believed that the depiction of contemporary scenes would vulgarize painting. Shōen's most significant contribution to *bijin-ga* was her disavowal of the traditional expression that emphasized sensuality and eroticism, and the reinvention of the genre from a female point of view. Her women live in a realm of ideal beauty, affirming maternity, chastity, and housewifely decency. The strong sense of Confucian morality Shōen espoused, however, never ideologically overshadowed her work; rather it invested the women she depicted with strength and dignity.

Training in the Maruyama-Shijō schools also prepared other Kyoto painters who frequently depicted women, such as Kikuchi Keigetsu, Tsuchida Bakusen, Nishiyama Suishō (1879–1958), Nakamura Daizaburō (1898–1947), Kainoshō Tadaoto (1894–1978), and Kimura Shikō (1895–1976) as well as female *bijin-ga* painters who followel Shōen. Significant among these are Keigetsu who incorporated *Yamato-e* techniques, exploiting beautiful and simplified lines; Bakusen, famous for his paintings of *maiko* and *Ohara-me*; Kajiwara Hisako (1896–1988) who first concerned herself with lower-class women suffering from poverty and later arrived at the themes of *maiko* and geisha; and Daizaburō who depicted contemporary female genre motifs as well as those of the Heian period through images of Noh. Bakusen was most notable for his awareness of Western modern art. Especially after his European trip in 1921–1923, he applied the new sense of aesthetics he learned from Western painting to his subjects. He was not interested in the life or personality of *maiko*; they were merely beautiful objects, just like red apples or pretty flowers, for him to depict. Hidden below the handsome faces of his women are his admiration for Renoir and the study of European painting from the Renaissance to Post-Impressionism.

After the Meiji Restoration, *bijin-ga*, originally popular in the form of *ukiyo-e*, the product typical of Edo's mass culture, was gradually turned into a vehicle of pure art through which individual artists pursued their own expression. Yet, the demand for *bijin-ga* has not declined today, in spite of the plethora of images of beautiful women that flood contemporary mass media. This commercialization of *bijin-ga* has prompted today's *Nihonga* painters to dismiss the genre as artistically irrelevant. Perhaps the contemporary state of *bijin-ga* may demonstrate how deep-rooted the aesthetics of *ukiyo-e* lie in the Japanese psyche.

(Translated by Reiko Tomii.)

Nihonga Materials and Techniques

Koyano Masako
Director, Art Conservation Lab.

Nihonga is a type of painting rendered with *iwaenogu* (mineral pigments) and *gofun* (shell white), mixed in a *nikawa* (animal glue) medium. The primary materials for supports are silk and paper, but wooden boards and linen are occasionally used.

A view of *Nihonga* painting under magnification shows the relatively coarse mineral-pigment particles enveloped in a thin layer of medium solution, attached to the support. The material allows light to travel through a thinner medium than that of Western oil painting; it is somewhat similar in structure to Western watercolor. For this reason, *Nihonga* appears to be softer in color.

Nihonga techniques, originally brought over to Japan from China along with Buddhism in the mid-seventh century, were established in their presently practiced form by the end of the eighth century. Although influenced by foreign culture, *Nihonga* essentially developed as a form of painting with styles and techniques unique to Japan. However, the development of *shin-iwaenogu*, or vitreous pigments, and synthetic media after World War II brought about significant changes: Some *Nihonga* painters today prioritize artistic expression, using their personal techniques, rather than traditional painting methods.

Materials

A. Support

Silk and paper are the primary supports used for *Nihonga*; wooden boards, linen, and even walls have been at times employed. Japanese paper has been most favored throughout the ages. Japanese paper, or *washi*, is handmade from fibers of the bark of *kōzo* (*Proussonetia papyrifera*), *mitsumata* (*Edgeworrhia papyrifera*), and *ganpi* (*Wikstroemia canescens*) plants. The paper used as support is slightly different from that used for backing. In modern times, papermakers have worked closely with painters and developed new kinds of papers by adding *ganpi* fiber for a glossy finish and devising various methods of turning fiber pulp into paper for an enhanced stain effect. Some papers have become commercially available, named after the painters who favored them, such as *Taikanshi* (Yokoyama Taikan's paper) and *Jipposhi* (Araki Jippo's paper).

Silk used in *Nihonga* is called *eginu*, or painting silk, and differs from the silk used for clothing. Silk threads are soaked in rice paste or a plant-based wax solution to enhance the stiffness suitable for a painting support. Furthermore, the process of *kinuta*, or beating threads with a wooden block to remove sericin, is omitted, allowing *eginu* to preserve its stiffness.

Examples of painting on linen are rare. When wall painting was at the height of its popularity, wooden walls and doors were utilized as supports and painting became a part of the architecture. The wooden plaque called *ema*, which was an offering to a temple or shrine during the Edo period, is another example of painting on wood.

B. Pigment

There are five types of pigment that have been used in *Nihonga* since the Nara period:

1. Natural mineral pigments, such as *gunjō* (azurite blue), *rokushō* (green), and *shu* (cinnabar red), are made from minerals such as azurite (for *gunjō*) and malachite (for *rokushō*). Finely crushed minerals are separated into different particle sizes through the levigation process, with diameters ranging from 0.1 to 0.001 millimeter; the finer the particles, the lighter the color. In ancient times, there were only a few pigment grades; there are now over a dozen grades, numbered in the order of fineness.
2. Natural earth pigments, such as *ōdo* (yellow ocher), *taisha* (hematite), *bengara* (red ocher), *hakudo* (white clay or kaolin), and *hakua* (chalk), are made from earth and consist of very fine particles of natural minerals separated by the levigation process. Yellow ocher is universally available. Hematite or red ocher is a natural red iron oxide. Red iron oxide for *bengara* may be obtained by burning *rōha* (greenish iron sulfate, $Fe_2SO_4H_20$). Chalk, or calcium carbonate, and white clay, or kaolin, are obtained from natural clay minerals.
3. Fine-grained pigments include *sumi*, *gofun* (shell white), *jinzō-shu* (synthetic vermillion), and *entan* (red lead). *Sumi*, or black ink, is made from carbon obtained by burning pine wood and rapeseed oil. The carbon is kneaded with glue, molded into various shapes, and slowly dried while set in moistened ashes. *Gofun* (shell white), a white pigment made from clam and oyster shells, was first used in the Muromachi era. Shells are weathered, crushed, mixed with water, and ground with a stone mill; pulverized shells are levigated and dried naturally on wooden boards.
4. Organic pigments include *enji* (cochineal red), *tōō* (gamboge yellow), and *ai* (indigo). *Enji*, an organic red, is made from secretions of the lac insect larvae as well as from extracts from female cochineal insects. Red extracted from plants such as safflower and sappanwood are also said to be employed as *enji* in *Nihonga*. Carmine lake has been used to make synthetic *enji*, called *yokō*, since the seventeenth century. Gamboge is a gum resin extracted from trees of the genus Garcinia of Southeast Asia. Indigo is an organic dye made from Polygonum tinctorum leaves through fermentation.
5. Gold (*kin*) and silver (*gin*) are used in the form of wash (*kindei* and *gindei*) and leaf (*kinpaku* and *ginpaku*). Japan's gold leaf is the thinnest in the world—1/10,000 millimeter. A gold strip is placed between *washi* paper soaked in a

solution of ash and hammered into a thin layer. The same process is applied to silver. In order to achieve variety in gold color, silver or copper is mixed in differing ratios. Gold wash is made from mixing gold leaf with animal glue and then rubbing in warm water.

After World War II, the following artificial or synthetic pigments have been further developed, allowing the creation of a variety of colors:

1. *Shin-iwaenogu*, or vitreous pigments, are made from a glass-like material. It is colored with metallic compounds, formed into blocks after melting at a high temperature, and then pulverized.
2. *Gōsei-iwaenogu*, or composite pigments, are white calcite powder to which synthetic dyes have been added.
3. *Doro-enogu*, or organic dyed clays, are shell white or white clay dyed with synthetic dyes.

C. Medium
Nikawa (animal glue) has long been used as a binding medium in traditional Japanese painting. In winter, animal hides are cooked for about four hours, then the extracted liquid is poured into a container and molded like gelatin. The glue, thinly sliced into sticks and dried, is called *sanzenbon* (three thousand sticks). After the war, synthetic binding mediums such as polyvinyl acetate and acrylic resin have also been used.

D. Mounting
Most *Nihonga* requires mounting. Painted supports are backed with hand-made *washi* paper in the form of hanging scrolls, handscrolls, framed paintings, folding screens, or standing panels. High-quality textiles such as gold brocade are also used for mounting.

Techniques
A. *Yamato-e* School
Techniques employed in the twelfth-century handscroll of the *Tale of Genji* exemplify the handling of colors in the traditional *Yamato-e* style. The painting process in this style is as follows:

1. A *washi* support is dampened with water by a brush and pasted to a panel at the edges; a silk support must be pasted onto a wooden panel. Sizing material called *dōsa* is then applied.
2. Outlines are drawn with thin *sumi* by a fine brush.
3. Pigments are prepared. The process differs according to the pigment type. Natural mineral pigment is placed in a white porcelain dish; a 10% animal glue solution is added and blended with the middle finger; water is added at the end to thin it.

Shell white is mixed with an animal glue solution; the dough-like mixture is rolled into a ball. Repeated pounding, or the "one-hundred pounding," is applied to the ball. Boiling water is then added to remove excessive animal glue. The prepared shell white is used when it is cooled.

Enji, or cochineal (organic dye), is extracted from cotton pads by soaking in hot water. After it dries in a dish, animal glue is gradually added.
4. To attain the desired intensity, thinly diluted paint may be repeatedly applied.
5. When the underdrawing of *sumi* lines is covered by the application of paint, they are often re-drawn over the paint. In the *horinuri* method, lines are created by leaving areas unpainted, which gives a different effect from drawn lines.

In addition, the shading technique of *bokashi* and the dripping technique of *tarashikomi* can also be employed. *Bokashi* is achieved through using specific tools and techniques of applying water, such as *karabake* (dry brush) and *kumadori-fude* (thick and round brush). The expansive and deep spatiality of *Nihonga* owes much to these *bokashi* techniques.

Karabake is useful in painting a very large area. First, by means of a wide brush, water is applied; paint is then applied over it; and finally, using *karabake*, or a dry brush, shading is completed very quickly. A smaller area can be shaded by alternately using a brush to apply paint and a *kumadori-fude* brush to apply water.

Tarashikomi is a method used most commonly by the seventeenth-century Rinpa school. Lines and forms are drawn on sized paper with a brush holding a large amount of thin *sumi*; drops of gold wash or *byakuroku* (pale malachite) are applied while the *sumi* is still wet. The seepage of paint creates appealing forms.

The technique for painting faces that developed in modern *bijin-ga* has its origins in the Maruyama-Shijō school of the Edo period. The outline of the face is first drawn with dilute *sumi*; pale red is applied to the cheeks and eyelids in the *bokashi* manner; white is applied as highlight on the nose bridge and chin. After the painting dries, shell white is thinly applied over the whole face; the hairline is thinned with water by the *bokashi* method. *Sumi* is applied to hair; again the hairline is thinned using *bokashi*. The application of thin shell white and *sumi* layers is repeated at least three times. Finally, eyes, nose, and individual hairs are drawn with dark *sumi*; the lips are drawn with light and dark reds.

B. Ink (*sumi*) painting
Ink painting techniques were brought from China during the Muromachi period and formed another style of *Nihonga*.

Unlike the *hakubyō* painting that uses only *sumi* lines, ink painting utilizes different shades of *sumi*.

Katabokashi (shading on the side) is a technique created by using a brush saturated with thin *sumi*. Dark *sumi* is added on the tip. It creates a line simultaneously dark and light.

Haboku (bleeding or running effect of ink) mixes light and dark *sumi* tones. A wash of thin *sumi* is first applied; before it dries, touches of dark *sumi* are added. It is often employed to draw tree branches.

Tarashikomi is a "dripping-in" technique. A large amount of thin *sumi* is applied on sized paper. Water, gold wash, dark *sumi*, *rokushō* (malachite), or *byakuroku* (pale malachite) is immediately dribbled on the wet *sumi* layer.

Junpitsu (wet brushwork) creates an effect of outward shading. A wash of thin *sumi* is first applied generously; dark *sumi* is applied over it.

Kappitsu (dry brushwork) uses strong strokes with a rather dry brush. It is often used to depict rocks and mountains.

C. Gold and Silver

Gold and silver have been used throughout the ages; their use has been adapted to changing painting styles to heighten the decorative quality of Japanese painting. In order to effectively and efficiently use these precious metals, gold and silver are applied in the form of wash as well as thin leaf.

For the application of gold leaf, the support is first coated with *hakushita-nori* (underpaste); when dried, the *dōsa* sizing is applied; the gold leaf is positioned immediately after the sizing. *Haku-akashi* is a method that facilitates the handling of extremely thin gold leaves: a piece of paper is coated with camellia oil using a *baren* (rubbing pad); the paper, placed on the gold leaf, temporarily attaches to the leaf when pressed with tweezers. *Urahaku* is a technique of placing the gold leaf behind the support to create a pale glow seen through the support.

Kiriko are small (0.4- to 0.6-centimeter-square) squares of gold leaf, cut by a bamboo knife. *Noge* are long thin (0.3-millimeter-wide) strands of gold leaf. Both are applied on supports coated with animal glue. *Sunago* are gold flakes made by pressing gold leaves through a bamboo strainer by tapping it with a brush tip. Flakes are sprinkled over a *dōsa*-sized support from the application strainer; *washi* paper is placed over it and lightly pressed by hand to fix the flakes.

Kirikane is an ancient technique developed in Japan. Three gold leaves are heated over red-hot charcoal and laminated together, then sliced into slender strips with a bamboo knife. *Kirikane*, with much brighter gold color than gold wash, creates a magnificent and rich feeling. When applying *kirikane*, *funori* glue made from seaweed is applied to the intended area by a fine brush held in the right hand the *kirikane* piece is then positioned by a brush held in the left hand.

D. Modern *Nihonga*

Significant changes in the history of *Nihonga* took place after World War II: the development of vitreous pigments, especially after 1950, and their popularization played a major role in prompting new stylistic trends. As opposed to natural mineral pigments that are expensive because of scarcity, vitreous pigments are synthetic and therefore affordable. With more than fifty colors available, the range of expression has been also greatly expanded.

Higashiyama Kaii, Ogura Yuki, and Hirayama Ikuo used these vitreous pigments abundantly as well as natural ones, aiming at a picturesque tone through a layering of pigments. Sugiyama Yasushi experimented with the layering of natural and vitreous pigments in order to achieve transparency. The use of synthetic media also helped to expand the horizons of expression in *Nihonga*. Some artists, including Kataoka Tamako, have used canvas boards as support and applied Western paint blended with polyvinyl acetate. There is an increasing number of young artists who are groping for individual expressions. However, traditional material and techniques always serves as the starting point of all new directions.

(Translated by the author.)

Catalogue

Steven D. Owyoung

This catalogue is organized according to thematic groupings. The larger categories of Eclecticism and Exoticism, Receptivity and Response, and Postwar Trends have been subdivided into smaller categories that are indicated in the headings in the following pages.

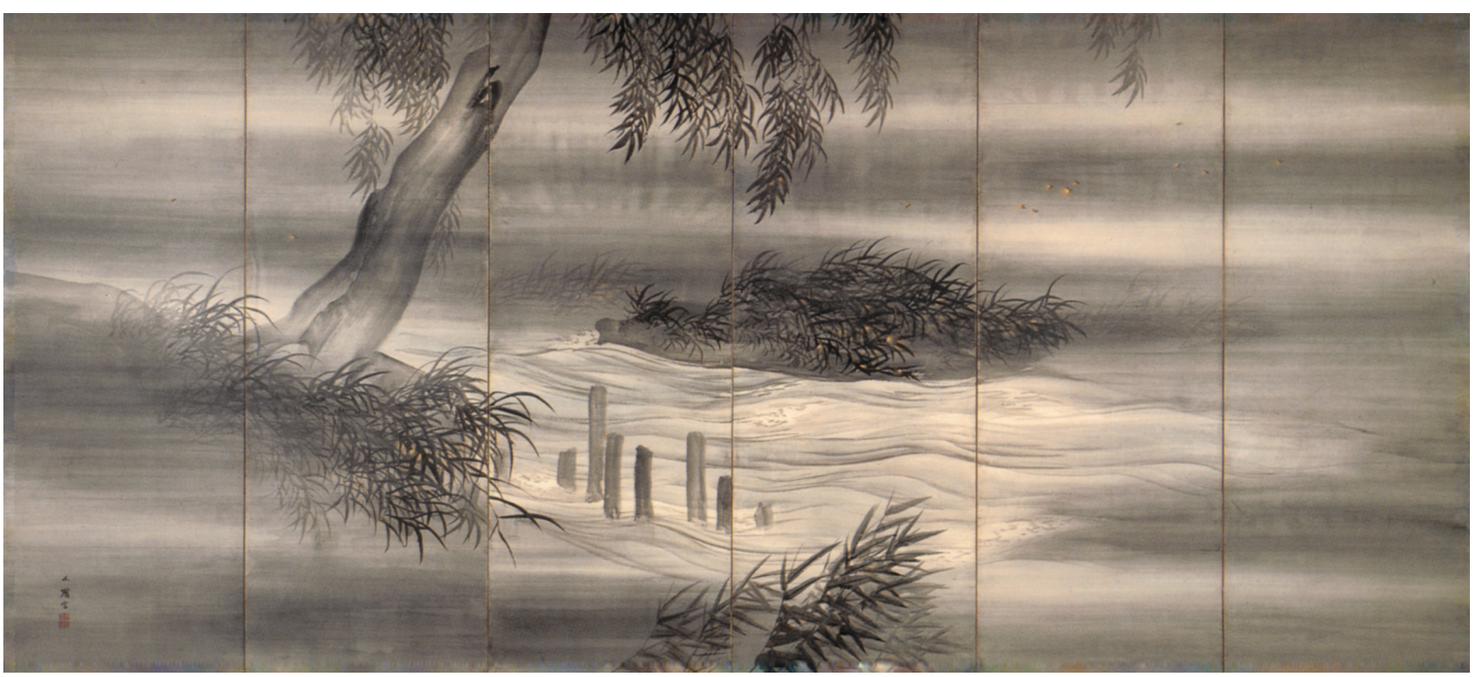
Data for each object is presented in the order of: title, date; artist, artist's life dates; format and medium; dimensions (height followed by width in centimeters); collection.

The works in the exhibition are referred to throughout this publication by their catalogue/plate numbers.

Japanese source materials have been researched by Harada Heisaku, Hirabayashi Akira, and Kobayashi Mioko, and translated by Reiko Tomii; additional material was provided by Ellen P. Conant and J. Thomas Rimer.

Eclecticism and Exoticism: Transitional Masters

Style had acquired a special connotation for the early Meiji artists who were heirs not only to the traditions of their respective schools but to the many other schools of painting that evolved over the course of more than a millennium. Because these schools did not replace each other but continued to coexist up until the time of the Meiji Restoration, Japanese painters consequently became so stylistically versatile and so technically proficient, that the manner adopted for a given work was likely to be determined by the subject of the painting, the occasion when and the location where it would be displayed, and the taste of the patron. This accounts for the diversity of styles apparent in the works of Shiokawa Bunrin, a leading Shijō-school painter of Kyoto, and Kawanabe Kyōsai, the Kanō-trained painter of Tokyo. (EPC)



1

Shiokawa Bunrin, 1801–1877

River Landscape with Fireflies, 1874

Pair of six-panel screens: ink, gold, and color on paper

172.7×377.2 cm. each

The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, Missouri (Purchase: Nelson Trust) 74-12/1, 2

Bunrin's evocative nocturne was created in the same year as Claude Monet's seminal painting, *Impression: Sunrise*. The theme of twilight and nocturnal landscapes as painted by Bunrin and his Japanese contemporaries was an innovative cross of night scenes found in *ukiyo-e* prints and the evocative and intimate effects achieved in traditional ink painting of the literati style and the Maruyama-Shijō school. This pair of screens, in particular, deeply resonates with the artistic concerns of nineteenth-century European artists such as James MacNeill Whistler, whose nocturnes attempted to capture the transitory moment as conveyed by atmosphere and changing light. As popular as he was inventive, Bunrin delighted his Kyoto patrons with his skillful depictions of light, fireflies, and sparklers piercing the misty dusk.





2

2

Shiokawa Bunrin, 1801–1877

Moon Over Lake in the Mountains, c.1870

Hanging scroll: ink on silk
37×101 cm.
British Museum, London

The rectangular, horizontal format of this brilliant ink painting is based on examples of Western art which the artist used to advantage in the creation of his own works. This work by Bunrin was collected by William Anderson (1842–1900), an early English collector who studied the history of Japanese painting while serving as a medical instructor for the Japanese Navy and a physician for the British embassy in Tokyo between 1874 and 1879. His keen interest and knowledge of painting led him to present a paper on the subject of Japanese pictorial arts at the Asiatic Society of Japan in 1879, just before his departure for Britain. After returning to London, he continued to collect and publish on art as part-time keeper of Oriental art at the British Museum.

3

Shiokawa Bunrin, 1801–1877

Vegetables and Small Bird, n.d.
(Yaso shōkin zu)

Hanging scroll: light color on silk
131.5×70.5 cm.
Kyoto Municipal Museum of Art

In *Vegetables and Small Bird*, Bunrin transforms traditional bird-and-flower painting (*kachō-ga*) into a distinctly modern idiom. Iizuka Beiu, the noted scholar on Meiji *Nihonga*, described this scroll in 1932 as a "new style of scenery painting" which influenced succeeding approaches to art during the Meiji period, particularly the work of *Nihonga* artists trained in the later Maruyama-Shijō styles of Kyoto. While the summer season here is by custom identified by the flowering peas, melon, and round eggplant, this painting is in strong contrast to the generally formal character of traditional bird-and-flower painting, whether of Rinpa, literati, or Kanō styles. Bunrin has stripped away the heavy symbolic and decorative elements of *kachō-ga* to paint this fresh and delicate summer setting filled with light and atmosphere.



3



4

Shiokawa Bunrin, 1801–1877

A Hundred Ancient Immortals, 1853

(Hyaku rōsen zu)

Hanging scroll: ink and color on silk
147×86 cm.
Private collection

Bunrin depicts a gathering of elders, a familiar subject in Japanese literati painting (*bunjin-ga*). Prototypes for *A Hundred Ancient Immortals* can be traced to the work of Ike no Taiga (1723–1776) and Yosa no Buson (1716–1783), both of whom painted scenes of scholarly gatherings overflowing with old men. Longevity is represented by the central, large dignified figure of the immortal Jurōjin who, garbed in scholarly robes, sits serenely in the midst of the symbols of long life: pines, deer, cranes, and magic fungi. He is surrounded by wizened oldsters who pursue gentlemanly pastimes, including drinking, viewing paintings, and playing chess and music.

5

Shiokawa Bunrin, 1801–1877

Assemblage of Folk Tale Characters, 1871

Hanging scroll: ink and light color on silk
165.1×93 cm.
Santa Barbara Museum of Art, Museum Purchase with funds provided by the Friends of Asian Art, Private Donations, and Special Acquisition Funds 1981. 23

Ōtsu-e were pictures of religious and folk themes sold to pilgrims and travellers visiting the temple Miidera along the Tōkaidō (Eastern Sea Road). Roughly drawn and painted in plain colors, these often humorous and irreverent paintings were later influenced by *ukiyo-e* and were also made as wood-block prints. Bunrin's figures such as the demon (*oni*) incongruously dressed up as a priest perched on high wooden clogs are based on some of the widely popular *Ōtsu-e* characters. Another character, Fukurokuju, one of the Seven Gods of Luck, is attended by a small dark demon standing on a ladder to shave the pate of the kneeling immortal.





6

Kawanabe Kyōsai, 1831–1889

Painting and Calligraphy Party, 1876
(Shoga-kai no zu)

Hanging scroll: ink and light color on paper
131.5×65.5 cm.
Collection of Nagano Masaharu

On May 21, 1876, Kyōsai attended a *shoga-kai*, a gathering of calligraphers and painters, held at the Nakamurarō restaurant in the Ryōgoku area of Tokyo. He and fifty or so other artists wielded their brushes before an eager and admiring public that could buy the works created in front of their eyes by some of the most famous figures in the art world of the time. Such popular events were quasi-commercial elaborations on the earlier, more intimate, private gatherings held among the *bunjin* or literati artists. These later, grander affairs became an integral part of artistic life in the late nineteenth century, providing younger painters greater exposure and support while allowing public access to the more celebrated artists. This "portrait" of the party highlights noted artists and Kyōsai's facsimiles of their work, miniature seals and all.



7

Kawanabe Kyōsai, 1831–1889

Kyōsai on Painting, 1887
(Kyōsai gadan)

Four volumes: color woodblock-printed books
25.3×17.6 cm. each
Collection of Komatsu Nobuhisa

Kyōsai on Painting is an autobiographical art treatise published in 1887. Kyōsai designed all of the wood-block images and dictated the text to his friend and pupil, the novelist Baitei Gasō (Uryū Masayasu, 1823–1893). Judging from the English language used in the captions to many of the illustrations and the lengthy technical section, the book was intended not only for his Japanese admirers but for a Western audience as well. Kyōsai's depictions of his life from his early studies with the *ukiyo-e* master Utagawa Kuniyoshi (1797–1861) as a six-year-old child on through his occasional brushes with the law as a devastatingly accurate social critic are all done in an animated style with plentiful detail that effectively conveys the atmosphere of the atelier or prison block.



8

Kawanabe Kyōsai, 1831–1889

Hidari Jingorō, 1884–1886
(Hidari Jingorō zu)

Two-panel screen: color on paper
145.6×162 cm.
Chiba City Museum of Art

The sculptor Hidari Jingorō (traditionally, 1594–1651) was an itinerant artist noted for his superb architectural carvings and legendary artistic powers. Known by his nickname "Left-handed" Jingorō, he is credited with sculptures at Kitano Shrine in Kyoto and Negoroji Temple in Wakayama around the historical Kansai region, as well as his famous *Sleeping Cat* (Nemuri-neko) near the main hall of Tokugawa Ieyasu's ornate mausoleum Tōshōgū Shrine at Nikkō north of Tokyo. Kyōsai depicts a popular story that casts the artist as a Japanese Pygmalion. In it, he retrieves a mirror dropped by the enchanting daughter of a feudal lord. Smitten by her beauty, Hidari Jingorō carves a life-size wooden image of her that comes alive when he lovingly placed the token mirror on her robes.

9

Kawanabe Kyōsai, 1831–1889

Events of the Twelve Months, after 1871
(Jūni-kagetsu tanzaku)

Twelve *tanzaku*: color on silk
34.4×5.9 cm. each
Kawanabe Kyōsai Memorial Museum, Warabi

Kyōsai's animated series of paintings correspond to twelve notable events of the traditional lunar calendar. He employs the *tanzaku*, the slender, standardized paper format for poetry and painting, which he embellishes with silk, rich colors, and gold. His compositional skills surely challenged, Kyōsai takes artistic advantage of the narrow shape and creates scenes from festivals and annual events (*nenchū gyōji*), customary seasonal practices, and humorous renderings of well-known themes.



June May April March February January

December November October September August July



10

Kawanabe Kyōsai, 1831–1889

Shakyamuni Undergoing Austerities, 1876
(Shaka nyorai zu)

Hanging scroll: ink, color, and gold on silk
38.5×27 cm.
Musée Nationale des Arts Asiatiques-Guimet, Paris

When the historical Buddha Shakyamuni renounced his princely life to seek enlightenment, he went into the mountains for six years to endure austerities of the body and spirit. Earlier Chinese and Japanese images of Shakyamuni's deprivations depict an emaciated figure, eyes closed and head gently resting on an upraised knee as if exhausted from his trials. So innovative and unorthodox was Kyōsai that his Shakyamuni is shown bone-lean, glaring beneath knitted brows, and hardened both physically and spiritually; the very experience is etched into Buddha's soul and made manifest by his stern countenance and the radiant, acidic colors of his robes and halo. Soon after their first meeting at the artist's studio in Tokyo, Kyōsai presented this work to Émile Guimet for the museum of comparative religion that the French industrialist opened in Lyon in 1878.

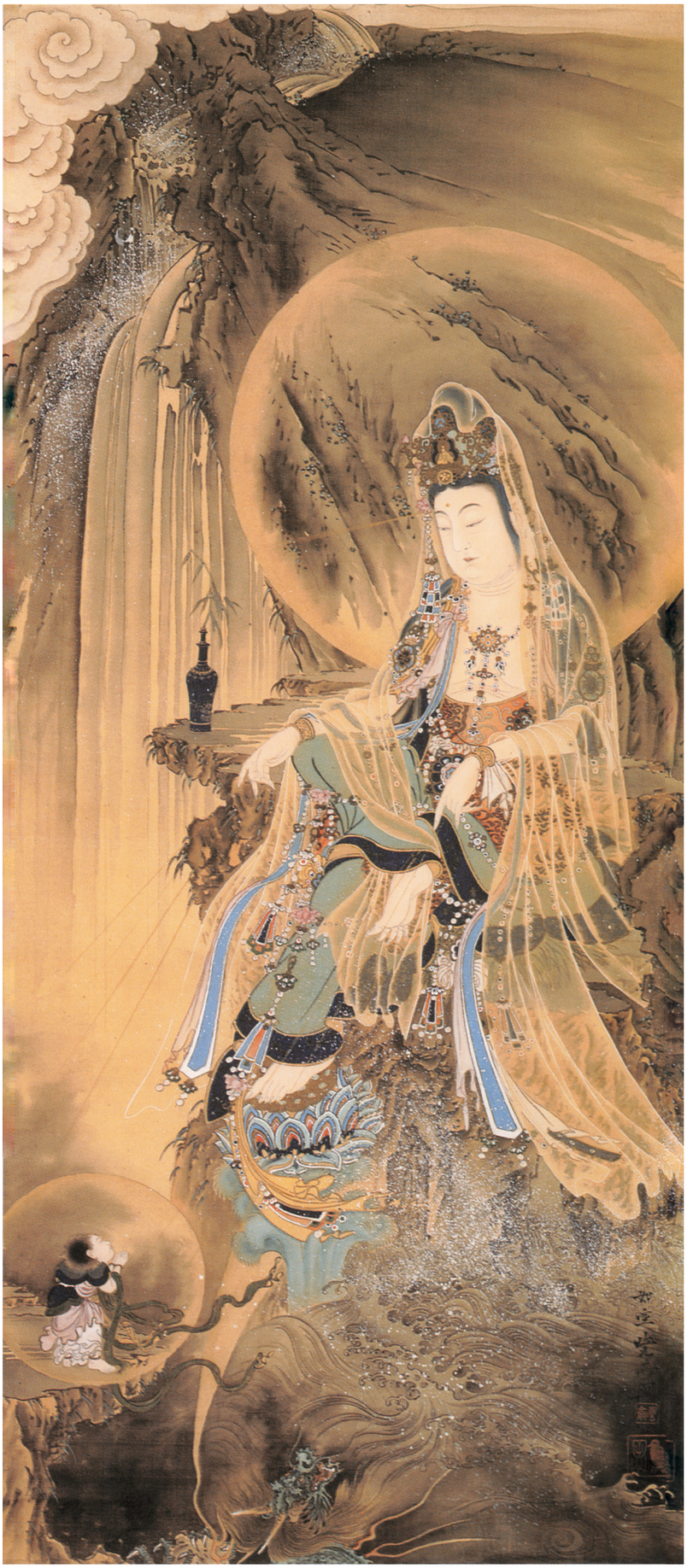
11

Kawanabe Kyōsai, 1831–1889

The Bodhisattva Kannon, after 1885
(Kanzeon bosatsu)

Hanging scroll: color on silk
117×50.6 cm.
The Japan Ukiyoe Museum, Matsumoto

Although Kyōsai was mercilessly irreverent about social and political change, he remained an ardent believer in the Buddhist deity Kannon. Kyōsai's Kannon is based on continental prototypes, Korean paintings which were long collected in temples and elsewhere in Japan. While he may have known of Kanō Hōgai's 1884 and 1888 versions of *The Compassionate Kannon* (Hibo Kannon), Kyōsai's own studies and devotions to Kannon had prepared him well for the accurate execution of her rigorous iconography. Kyōsai's innovation is a wonderfully eccentric palette. Using expensive Chinese pigments, he utilized a vibrant new color scheme, using vivid cobalt and an odd whitish green. The gold that he applied to the back of the silk adds a subtle glow to the work.





12

Kawanabe Kyōsai, 1831–1889

"In Front of the Paris Opera," Act IV in The Strange Tale of the Castaways: A Western Kabuki by Kawatake Mokuami, 1879

(Kawatake Mokuami-saku "Hyōryū kidan seiyō kabuki" yori Parisu gekijō omotegakari no ba)

Framed: color on silk
62.9×90.8 cm.
Gas Museum (Tokyo Gas Co., Ltd.), Kodaira

The dramatic play *The Strange Tale of the Castaways: A Western Kabuki* was performed at the Shintomiza Theater in Tokyo in September 1879. Written by Kawatake Mokuami (1816–1893), it represented a new genre of *katsureki-geki* or "living history plays" that combined historical authenticity and pictorial realism with modern and Western elements. The drama presented the fairly traditional storyline of a lost seaman sought by his grieving father, but the play's sense of excitement and adventure is heightened by its placement in the West—San Francisco, London, and Paris—with kindly French doctors, ferocious natives, and worldly Japanese diplomats for characters. This arresting image of the drama's Japanese consul and his sister-in-law about to enter the Paris Opera House in gorgeous Western attire is based on a sketch by Kawatake Mokuami and is one of five designs created by Kyōsai for silk picture lanterns hung in teahouses as advertisements.

13

Kawanabe Kyōsai, 1831–1889

Arrival of the American Diplomat,
1870s–1880s
(Beikoku shisetsu kairai no zu)

Hanging scroll: ink and light color on paper
132.5×60 cm.
National Museum of Ethnology, Leiden

Notorious for his keen, probing eye and even sharper wit, Kyōsai had numerous targets, but he took particular delight in skewering officials and bureaucrats. The image of the American diplomat here reveals the dignitary's officiousness, if not arrogance, as he rides ramrod-straight on his prancing mount. With fluid, lightning strokes, Kyōsai finished this work in just minutes, using ink and graded washes with finishing touches of red. Although unidentified, the picture may represent Townsend Harris, the New York merchant and first American consul-general to Japan. During his official tenure from 1856 to 1862, Harris concluded the first commercial treaty between the U.S. and Japan and rose to the post of Minister Resident before returning to the United States.



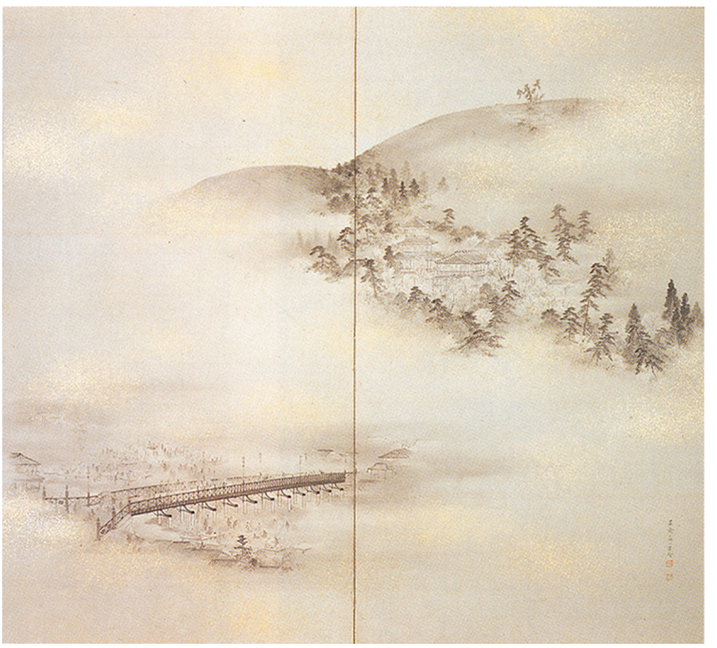
Eclecticism and Exoticism: Meiji Masters

The many new schools of painting that developed during the Edo period (1600–1868) revived, reinterpreted, and recombined earlier schools of Japanese painting with elements drawn from Chinese and Western art, resulting in a rich diversity of tradition. The tradition was so immeasurably enlarged and enriched during the Meiji era by a profusion of new resources and opportunities available in Japan and abroad—due to the establishment of museums, exhibitions, government schools, foreign teachers, foreign travel and training, a proliferation of art publications, and improved methods of reproduction—that the artists rarely had the time to absorb, the experience to integrate, and the confidence to internalize so many eclectic and exotic strains. Nonetheless, the challenges and the impetus to experiment were so compelling that the paintings of the Meiji masters are invariably accomplished and often remarkably eloquent and innovative. (EPC)



14





15

14

Kanō Hōgai, 1828–1888

Landscape in Snow, 1867
(Setchū sansui)

Hanging scroll: ink and light color on paper
130×59.7 cm.
The Yamaguchi Prefectural Museum of Art

Around 1861, Hōgai studied the work of Sesshū Tōyō (1420–1506), most notably a Kanō-school copy of Sesshū's so-called *Long Landscape Scroll* (Sansui chōkan), 1486. Traditionally, the Kanō style was based in clarity of calligraphic brushwork and a balanced composition with little or no atmosphere. In this snow-covered scene, Hōgai has reduced the need for texture strokes to model his forms and relies instead on strong, dark ink outlines to define the landscape in which distance is indicated by the diminution in scale of trees and architecture. The painting is representative of Hōgai's resourceful but fundamentally conservative style, which sought out traditional models before his artistic experiments of the 1880s.

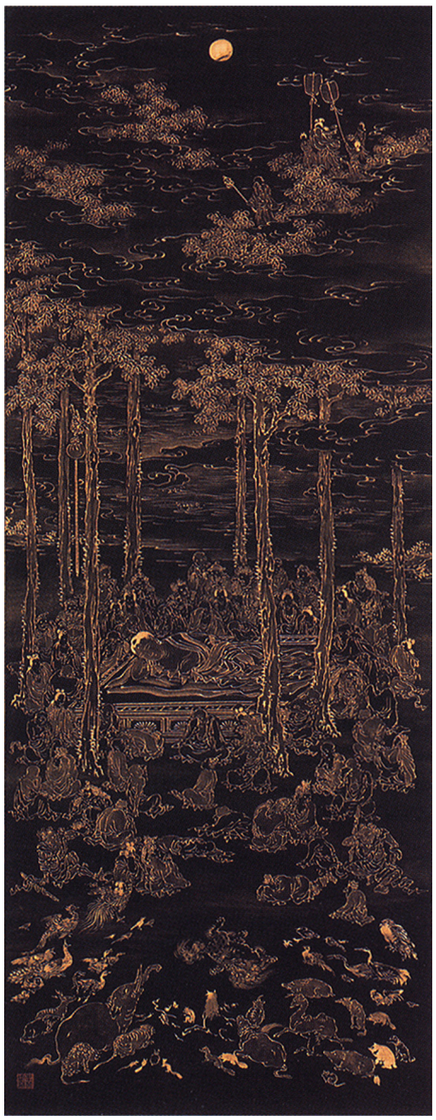
15

Mori Kansai, 1814–1894

New Celebrated Sites of Kyoto in Four Seasons, 1873
(Kyō shin-meisho shiki zu)

Pair of two-panel screens: light color on paper
151.5×169 cm. each
Kyoto Prefectural Sōgō Shiryōkan (The Museum of Kyoto)

In the 1870s, libraries and schools began to be built in Japan to promote education and modernization. The earliest school system was established in Kyoto, which also founded a library and a chemical research center. The new official buildings were hybrids, incorporating European elements into traditional design and construction. Kansai used the modern architectural landmarks in Kyoto in this work: Yoshimizu Onsen, Kyoto-Prefecture Secondary School, and the library Shūshoin. Charmed by all that is new, unfamiliar, and exotic, Kansai accurately represents the Western influence in these buildings but forgoes any blueprint-like detail. Rather, he treats them as part of the ever-changing landscape of old Kyoto and subordinant to the decorative character of the screen format as well as the traditional theme of the four seasons.



Nirvāna, The Death of the Buddha



The Rock Door of Heaven

16

Kōno Bairei, 1844–1895

The Rock Door of Heaven; Nirvāna, The Death of the Buddha, n.d.

(Ama no iwato; Butsu nehan zu)

Pair of hanging scrolls: ink and color on silk
70.5×27 cm. each
The Mary and Jackson Burke Foundation, New York

Bairei depicts the Shintō theme of *The Rock Door of Heaven* as the religious and philosophical complement to *The Death of the Buddha*. He represents the Shintō deity Amaterasu Ōmikami, the sun goddess, hiding behind the Rock Door of Heaven, thereby plunging all into darkness and chaos. The assembled gods tempted and tricked her with dances and music, finally pulling her out so that light would again fill the universe and an ordered society could begin. In the Buddhist painting, moments before his death, Buddha lies beneath tall trees awaiting the end of his life and the attainment of absolute enlightenment. Bairei creates a sumptuous work in gold and gold wash over a deep indigo blue ground in the manner of ancient Buddhist sutra scrolls, creating a stunning partner to the light-filled painting of the sun goddess, Amaterasu.

18

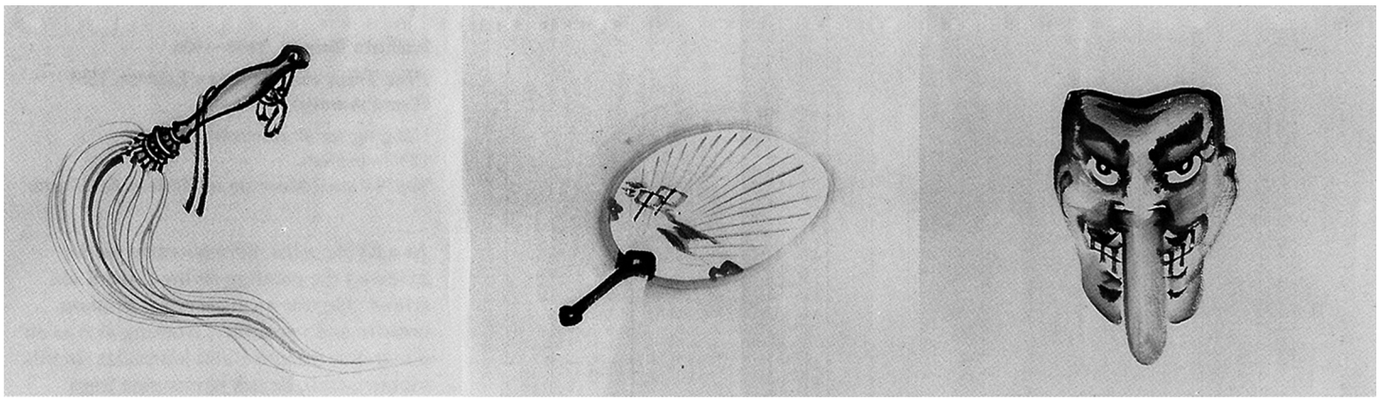
Kōno Barei, 1844–1895

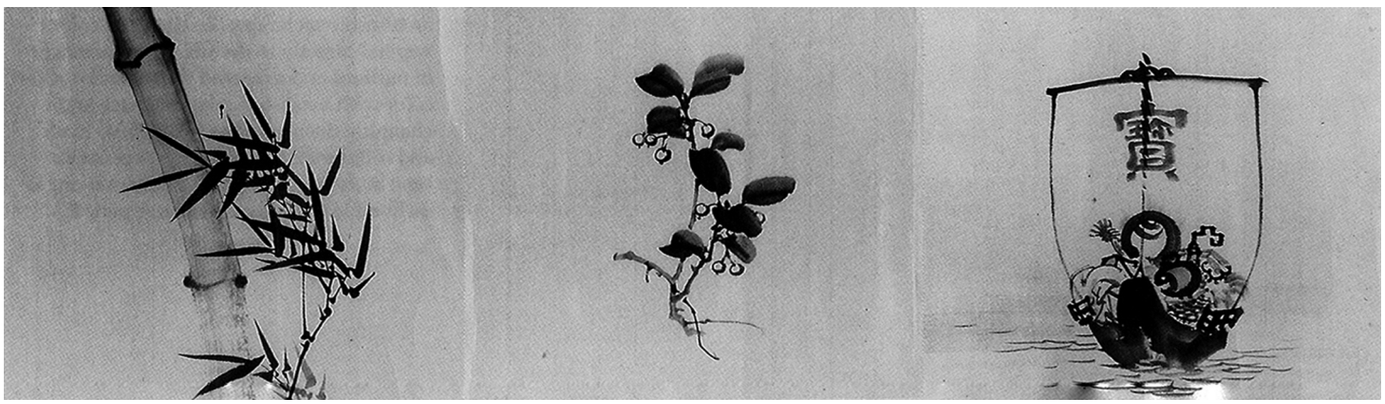
Pottery Studio of Kiyomizu Rokubei, c.1882

Handscroll: ink and color on silk
49×277 cm.
Markham Sexton, courtesy Peabody Essex Museum, Salem

Edward Sylvester Morse was a zoologist who became an enthusiastic collector of Japanese ceramics during his several visits to Japan beginning in 1877. Unable to obtain the original, Morse commissioned Bairei to replicate a painting of the famous Rokubei family's pottery studio in Kyoto. Bairei's familiarity with ceramic techniques grew out of his own interest in the craft but also reflected the close relationships among the arts in Kyoto.







17

Kōno Barei, 1844–1895

Painting Exercises: Examples for Brushwork, 1890

(Shūgakan [Unpitsu tehon])

Handscroll: ink and color on paper
30.6×966.3 cm.
Collection of Kōno Toyokazu

As educational tools, Bairei created books and scrolls filled with examples of individual motifs executed in the Maruyama-Shijō style. Usually culled from days of instruction during which Bairei would demonstrate brushwork and representation of forms for his students, these examples covered a wide variety of subjects, including plants, vegetables, rocks, ceramic vessels, and costumes. Such lessons were later mounted together and used as primers by his many students who learned his techniques by copying his examples.





19

Kubota Beisen, 1852–1906

Pine Trees and Autumn Leaves, 1885
(Tsuta momiji)

Hanging scroll: color on silk
123.7×46.8 cm.
The National Museum of Modern Art, Kyoto

As a Kyoto artist, Beisen's early works followed the painting styles of the Kishi school. He was an artist of uncommon breadth and versatility, working also as an illustrator, designer, and journalist. In this vibrant scroll, Beisen paints pine trees covered by climbing ivy which has turned gold and crimson in the autumn season. In an unusual technique, he has used color applied directly to the silk without benefit of outlines and gradated the intensity of the color with washes to suggest space and changing distance. The image is so fresh and different from other paintings of its time in its use of brighter colors that one is inclined to attribute it to a later period.

20

Kawabata Gyokushō, 1842–1913

***Small Birds in Snow*, n.d.**
(Setchū shōkin zu)

Hanging scroll: color on silk
125.7×52 cm.
Collection of Etsuko and Joe Price, a promised gift to The Los Angeles County Museum of Art

Among his many talents, Gyokushō was an accomplished painter of birds and flowers. Having undergone extensive training in the Maruyama tradition, he continued the realism that was the hallmark of the school in this work. Gyokushō's technique and compositional style are related to the influential work of the Chinese artist Shen Nanping (fl. mid-18th century). His paintings of birds, trees, and flowering plants had an enormous impact on the development of later painting, most notably the works of Edo-period artists like Itō Jakuchū (1716–1800), and Gantai (1782–1865). *Birds in Snow* is but one example by Gyokushō of the alternatives for realism inherent in traditional sources and a known quality against which the vaunted realism of Western painting could be measured.





21

Kanō Hōgai, 1828–1888

Landscape with Cliff, c.1880
(Kengai sansui)

Hanging scroll: ink on paper
87.8×52.7 cm.
Shimonoseki City Art Museum

From about 1880 through 1884, Hōgai's experiments within the Kanō tradition yielded a number of landscapes which were atypical of the period and his own work. Here the artist strives to convey the image of wild, inaccessible peaks and precipices illuminated by an unearthly light or hidden in dark shadow. The exaggerated landscape forms, which are further punctuated by high contrasts of dark and light, create a restless, fantastic picture whose eccentricity exceeds the bounds of traditional landscapes in the conservative Kanō repertoire. This painting is the earliest of a group of three extant works with the same title and compositional structure. If the attributed dates of these paintings are accurate, it shows that Hōgai's experiments predate his acquaintance with Ernest Fenollosa.

22

Kanō Hōgai, 1828–1888

Prancing Horse Under Cherry Tree, 1884
(Ōka yūku zu)

Hanging scroll: ink and light color on paper
138.1×63.5 cm.
Banshō Co. Ltd., Akita

Between 1882 and 1883, Hōgai met Ernest Fenollosa who by late 1883 had hired the artist to paint for him. Encouraged by Fenollosa to create a contemporary art form using traditional Kanō style, Hōgai experimented with adaptations of Western techniques. In February of 1884, Hōgai joined the Kanga-kai, the art appreciation society organized by Fenollosa and Okakura Tenshin. This painting was one of two works that Hōgai exhibited at the second Domestic Painting Competitive Exhibition (*Naikoku kaiga kyōshinkai*) held in April of 1884. It was widely admired for its dynamism, its taut pulsating line, and the elegant modeling of the horse.





23

Hashimoto Gahō, 1835–1908

Moonlit Landscape, 1889
(Getsuya sansui)

Hanging scroll: ink and color on paper
82.4×136.8 cm.
Art Museum, Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music

Gahō and Kanō Hōgai studied under Kanō Shōsen'in Tadanobu (1823–1880) of the Kobiki-chō branch of the Kanō school. They are credited with introducing innovative elements, especially a feeling of space, into the Kanō style. In this moonlit landscape, which was painted the same year he became head of the painting department at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts (Tokyo Bijutsu Gakkō), Gahō was encouraged by Ernest Fenollosa and Okakura Tenshin to introduce a sense of spatial recession by using atmospheric perspective, gradated washes, subtle modeling, and overlapping motifs. Running strongly counter to the attempt at Westernization, however, is the distinctively Kanō emphasis on brushwork—an insistent summoning of thick, nearly unmodulated line and traditional surface texture to define earth, flora, and even clouds in an otherwise evocative, misty landscape.



24

Kawabata Gyokushō, 1842–1913

Bounty of the Sea, c.1892
(Umi no sachi zu)

Hanging scroll: color on silk
82.4×146 cm.
Yamatane Museum of Art, Tokyo

This scene of a fishing village tucked behind sea cliffs combines the naturalism of traditional painting with single-point perspective. The result is a blend of familiar motifs and pictorial conventions. Chinese and Japanese models are recognizable in Gyokushō's use of a darkened foreground promontory as well as the criss-crossed pines. The level distance and orderly perspective of the village are more modern approaches to painting, in keeping with the artist's Western studies. Such experimental mixtures by Gyokushō were encouraged by Ernest Fenollosa and Okakura Tenshin. By the end of the Meiji era, there was such an admixture of methodologies and pictorial elements that references to Kanō, Maruyama-Shijō, or other traditional schools could no longer fully identify an artist or his work.



25

Araki Kanpo, 1831–1915

Peacock, 1890
(Kujaku)

Hanging scroll: color on silk
144.7×259 cm.
Museum of the Imperial Collections, Tokyo

Kanpo was among several *Nihonga* painters to study Western art under the *yōga* artists Kawakami Tōgai (1827–1881) and Kunisawa Shinkurō (1847–1877). He created an elaborate style of academic painting by integrating *Nihonga* with Western and Chinese elements, principally the Westernized style of academic painting promoted at the Chinese imperial court in the eighteenth century under the influence of Giuseppe Castiglione (Lang Shining, 1688–1768). Richly detailed and elegantly ornate, this work is representative of the type of painting that the Ministry of the Imperial Household commissioned for the decoration of palaces and official reception rooms.

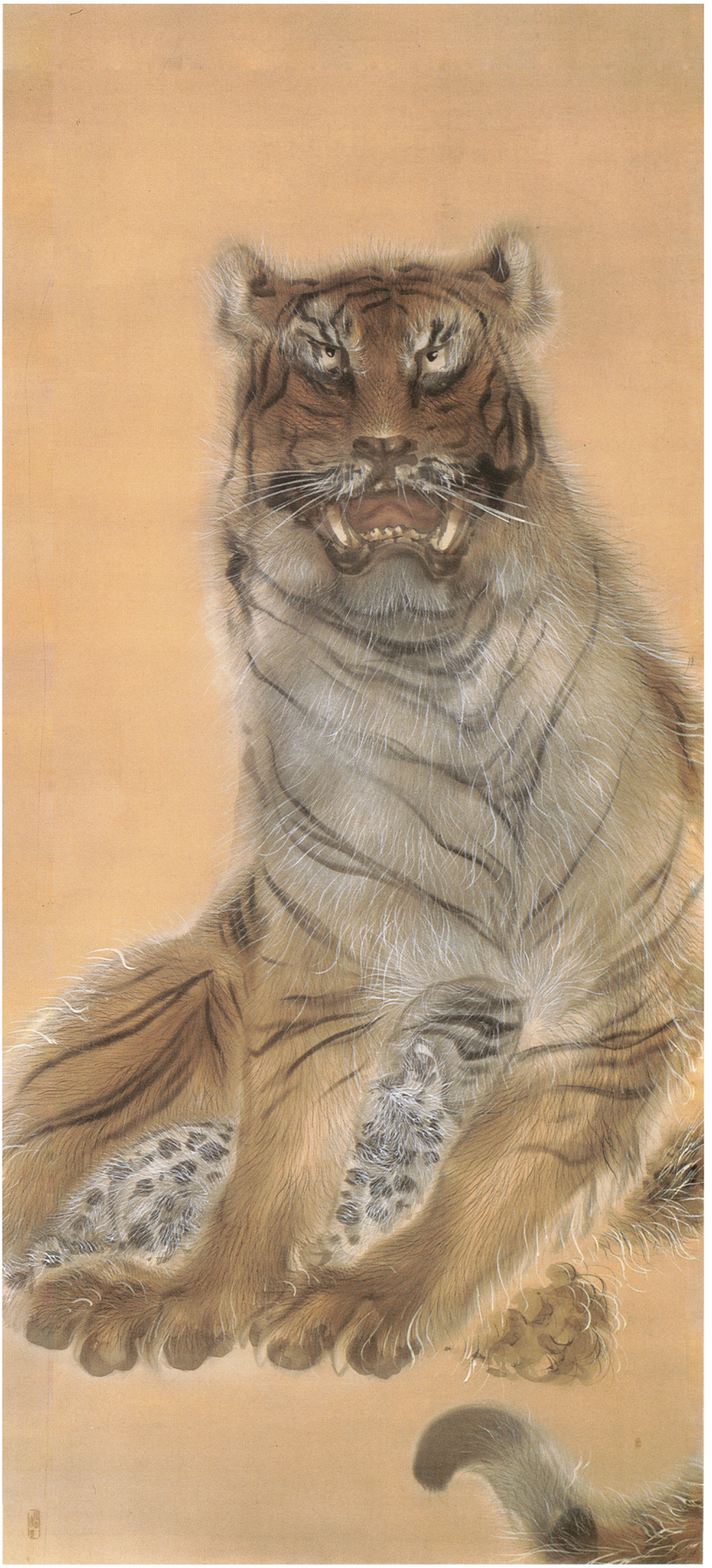
26

Kishi Chikudō, 1826–1897

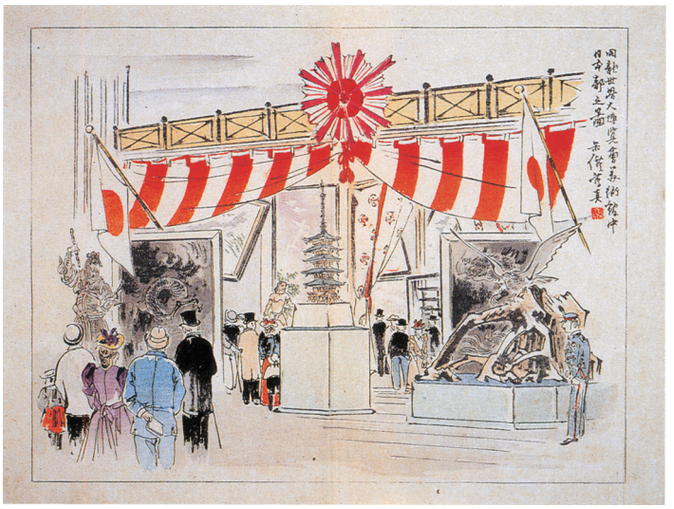
Tiger, 1893
(Tora zu)

Hanging scroll: color on silk
161.8×71.5 cm.
Tokyo National Museum

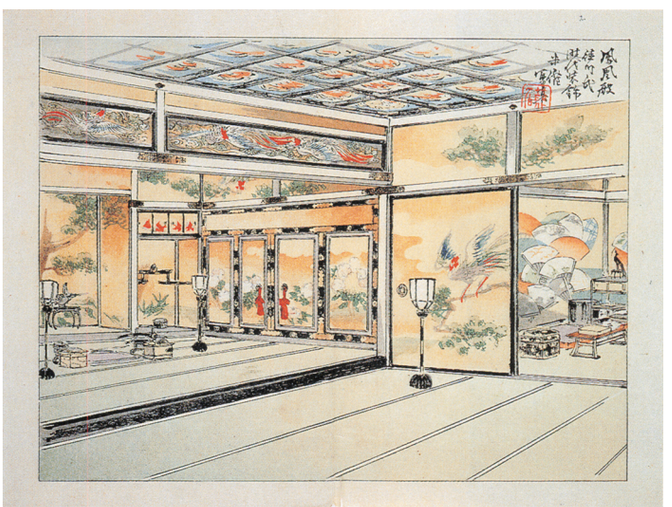
Tigers were a favorite subject of Kyoto painters. The founder of the Kishi school, Ganku (1756–1838), sought to surpass Maruyama Ōkyo in his renditions of this exotic animal. Tigers became a specialty of Kishi painters, who handled the subject with great skill. Chikudō added to this tradition by studying actual animals. On the occasions when he was able to see live tigers, which were as exotic in Japan as elephants or camels, Chikudō spent days sketching the beasts. In *Tiger*, the artist has painted a great feline nursing a spotted cub beneath her striped coat and massive paws. The symmetry of the fangs in the slightly opened jaws, repeated in the tiger's glaring eyes, enhances the picture's animated quality. The painting was shown at the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago and was greatly admired for its graphic power.











27

Kubota Beisen, 1852–1906

Art Exhibited at the World's Columbian Exposition, 1894

(Koronbia sekai hakurankai bijutsuhin gafu)

Originally four volumes: color printed books
23.8×15.7 cm.
Tokyo National Research Institute of Cultural Properties

An uncommonly versatile artist, Beisen agreed in 1890 to work as a journalistic illustrator for the new Tokyo newspaper, *Kokumin shinbun* (People's Newspaper), published by the writer and historian Tokutomi Sohō (1863–1957). Skilled in pictorial reportage, the artist applied his art to illustrate all manner of newsworthy events, including the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago which he attended in 1893. Similar works were published in this four-volume set of printed books. One of the pages shows an international crowd at the entrance to the Japanese exhibition enclosed by a traditional-style structure and beneath the ironwork of the larger Palace of Fine Arts building.





28

Kubota Beisen, 1852–1906

Battles by Land and Sea, 1894
(Kairiku sentō zu)

Pair of hanging scrolls: ink and light color on paper
116×51.5 cm. each
Takaoka Municipal Museum

On August 1, 1894, China and Japan formally declared war. As an illustrator for *Kokumin shinbun* (People's Newspaper), Beisen was sent to cover events of the Sino-Japanese War of 1894–1895, in which Japan soundly defeated superior Chinese forces in Korea and the North China coast. On returning to Japan and reporting to the imperial supreme command base near Hiroshima, Beisen submitted works depicting the war. Beisen's vivid journalistic paintings of battle fronts, as well as the illustrations of other reporter-artists like Kobayashi Kiyochika (1847–1915), not only provided eye-witness records of the fighting on land and sea but also reinforced the image of Japan's rapidly changing role in international affairs and the military and commercial industrialization of the country.



29



30

29

Kishi Chikudō, 1826–1897

Valley of Red Leaves, 1890s
(Kōyōkei)

Hanging scroll: ink and color on silk
114.7×16.8 cm.
Collection of Griffith and Patricia Way, Seattle

For most of its length, Chikudō's long hanging scroll is a traditional literati ink landscape, which he transforms into a lyrical seasonal image by inserting the surprising red-yellow leaves of autumn at the very bottom of the painting. The narrowness of the format itself is a further element of literati painting with antecedents in both China and Japan. Emerging from light-filled mists, the steep, Chinese-style mountains are rendered in mottled ink washes and masterful brushwork.

30

Watanabe Seitei, 1851–1918

Shinobazu Pond, 1893
(Shinobazu-no-ike)

Hanging scroll: light color on silk
120×40.5 cm.
Collection of Murakami Yukiteru

This snowscape reveals the extent to which Seitei created works that synthesized native and foreign techniques that could appeal to both his Japanese and Western audiences. The foreground boat and the distant pavilion are rendered in a level view that is mitigated by traditional atmospheric perspective, especially in the trees rising behind the far shore. Looming large and unexpected and slightly out of kilter with the rest of the painting is the snowy slope of a mountain.



Kishi Chikudō



Mori Kansai



Kōno Bairei

31

Kishi Chikudō, 1826–1897
Kōno Bairei, 1844–1895
Mori Kansai, 1814–1894, et al.

Album of Poetry and Painting by Kyoto Masters: A Meeting of Minds for Elegant Taste, late 1880s–early 1890s
(Heian meika shigajō: Kaishin seishō)

Album: ink and color on silk
36×15 cm.
Collection of Griffith and Patricia Way, Seattle

This lavishly mounted album of paintings and calligraphy was compiled by the Kyoto calligrapher Yamada Kokō (b.1852). Elegantly rendered with ink and color on silk, the paintings are light, charming pictures representing calligraphy, landscapes, and the art of bird-and-flower painting by Kishi Chikudō, Mori Kansai, and Kōno Bairei, as well as other Kyoto artists from various schools: Tomioka Tessai, Asai Hakuzan (1842–1907), Tanomura Chokunyū (1814–1907), Mochizuki Gyokusen (1834–1913), Suzuki Shōnen (1849–1918), Morikawa Sobun (1847–1902), Taniguchi Aizan (1816–1899), and Ono Kōzan (1814–1910).



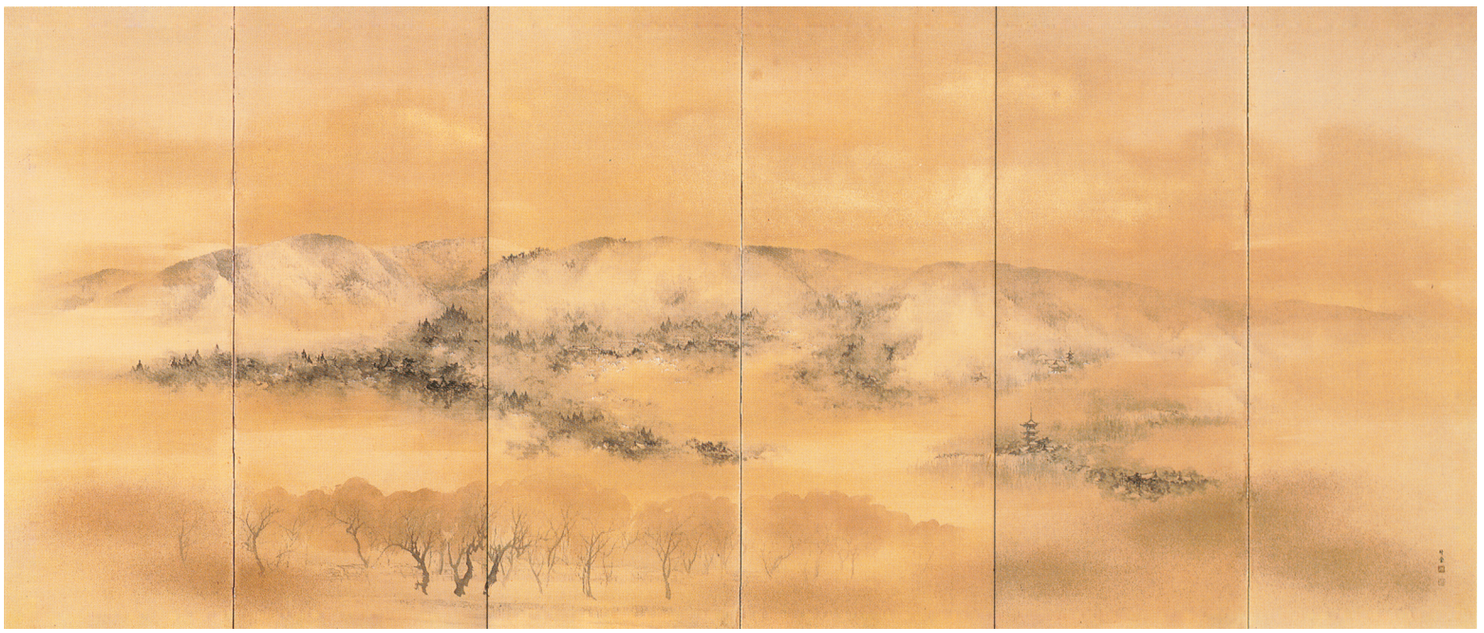
32

Kishi Chikudō, 1826–1897

View of Higashiyama, 1896
(Higashiyama zenkei zu)

Pair of six-panel screens: ink and light color on silk
150×356 cm. each
Kongōbuji, Wakayama Prefecture

One of the most accomplished artists of his day, Chikudō was particularly innovative in his landscapes. Painted for an exhibition of screens to commemorate the establishment of the Heian Shrine, this encompassing view of the eastern hills of Kyoto anticipates the later pictorial achievements of Takeuchi Seihō who, on his return from Europe in 1901, combined modern notions of points of view, atmospheric perspective, and spatial relationships with traditional media, techniques, and formats. Chikudō's use of low-level, penetrating panoramas is fused with the rich decorative tradition of Kyoto painting. Placed in the middle ground is the Daigokuden (Great Hall) of the Heian Shrine.





33

Kishi Chikudō, 1826–1897

The Moon Emerging from Maruyama,
c.1897
(Maruyama togetsu no zu)

Hanging scroll: ink and light color on silk
131×50.4 cm.
Tenneiji, Kyoto

At the end of his life, Chikudō lived in the Maruyama district of Kyoto. His view of the full moon each month was affected by the surrounding hills and surely inspired this striking picture. In the painting, a large, pale orb washed in warm gold and cool platinum rises from a shadowy crest done in ink. Literally translated, the artist's inscription reads, "Maruyama spitting out the moon." Chikudō's idea, therefore, is a visual pun in which the full moon emerges from and repeats the shape of the round *(maru)* mountain *(yama)*. For its mastery of ink and color, this is one of the most extraordinary paintings from the Meiji period.

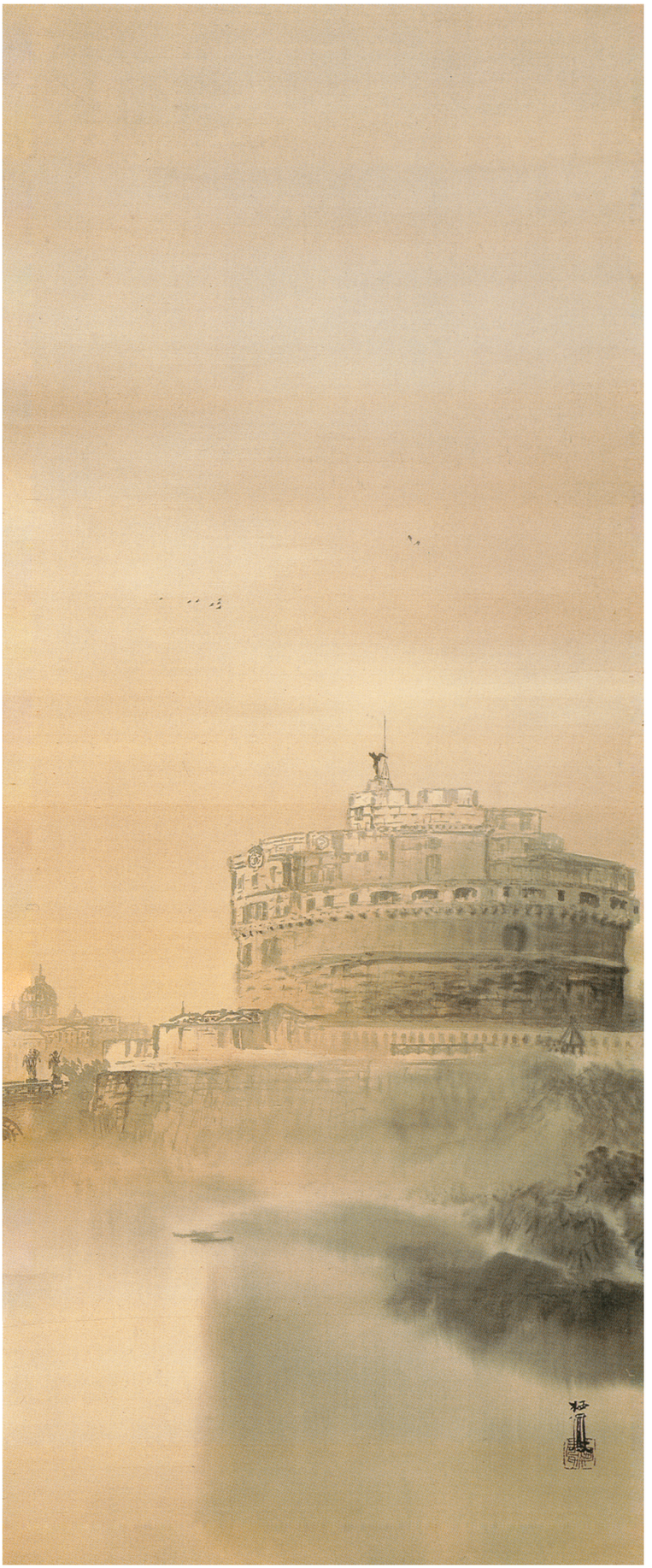
34

Takeuchi Seihō, 1864–1942

Ancient Castle, Rome, 1901
(Rōma kojō zu)

Hanging scroll: ink and light color on silk
126.5×51.2 cm.
Kachūan Seihō Museum, Kyoto

In 1900, Takeuchi Seihō was sent to Europe to observe the state of art in the West at the Paris Exposition. Returning after six months, he painted this view of the Castel Sant'Angelo on the Tiber River and several other pictures based on his trip. While utilizing compositional space, masterful techniques, media, and the traditional formats familiar to his audience, Seihō introduced scenes of Rome, Holland, and Venice, which he painted in single-point perspective and naturalistically modeled in light and shadow. During the following decade, Seihō continued to integrate these disparate elements, including Western scenes, into a remarkably seamless and enduring form of modern painting. Even more importantly, he would wield these methods to influence the course of *Nihonga* as one of its most important art teachers.





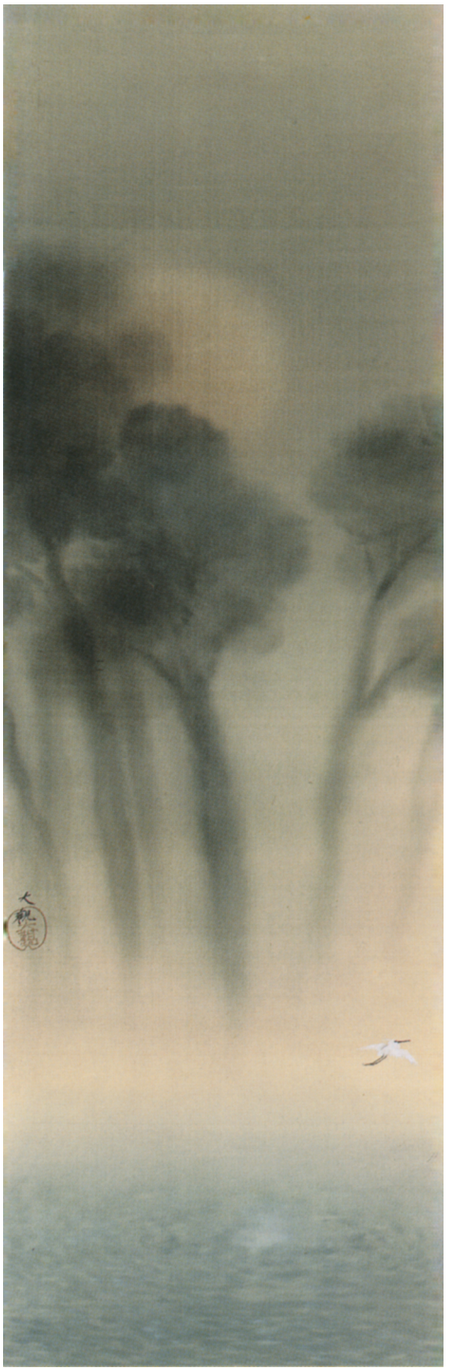
35

Hishida Shunsō, 1874–1911

Autumn Landscape with Colored Leaves, 1899
(Shūkei [Keizan kōyō])

Hanging scroll: color on silk
163.9×97.4 cm.
Shimane Prefectural Museum of Art
(Planning Office)

From about 1895 to 1909, Shunsō developed a mode of figure and landscape painting that relied more on color than on line to convey atmosphere, space, and light. In 1899, he produced *Autumn Landscape with Colored Leaves*, a picture of a deep forest pool in which line is clearly subordinate to a subtle palette of gradated colors and rich washes. While his individual technique differed from traditional precedents, Chinese and Japanese painting had for centuries enjoyed the highly expressive qualities of outlineless or "boneless" painting. This art historical point, as well as the significance of Shunsō's non-linear painting to Western modern art and *yōga*, however, was lost on conservative critics who labelled his works as *mōrō-tai* or "hazy style."



36



37

36

Yokoyama Taikan, 1868–1958

Misty Moon, c.1900
(Oboro zuki)

Hanging scroll: color on silk
110.8×35.7 cm.
Fukuoka Art Museum

37

Yokoyama Taikan, 1868–1958

The Cuckoo, 1904
(Hototogisu)

Framed: light color on silk
88×49.5 cm.
Fukui Fine Arts Museum

In concert with his colleagues Hishida Shunsō and Shimomura Kanzan, Taikan began to rely on color rather than on line to represent the effect of atmosphere on light and the sense of space and distance. His critics disparaged these evocative scenes by calling the paintings *mōrō-tai*, or "hazy style," ignoring the fact that their experimental quality and the long history of technical and artistic precedents was in keeping with both Chinese and Japanese painting. When Okakura Tenshin travelled to America in 1904, Taikan and Shunsō accompanied him. With the help of John LaFarge, Tenshin arranged for Taikan and Shunsō to exhibit their works in New York, Boston, and Washington, D.C., selling enough works to subsidize their travel.



38

38

Hashimoto Gahō, 1835–1908

Trees in Twilight, 1903
(Rinkan zanshō)

Hanging scroll: light color on paper
52.5×85 cm.
Sunpu Museum, Shizuoka

A student of the Kobiki-chō branch of the Kanō school, Gahō inherited an extensive repertoire of Chinese models, including compositions from as far back as the tenth century. This landscape exemplifies the extent to which Ming and Qing prototypes dominated Gahō's art this late in his career. The representation of light is clearly a modern thematic concern as is a more level perspective in both compositions; moreover, Gahō has restricted the use of heavy, calligraphic line to a minimum, all efforts contributing to a more realistic picture. The extraordinary quality of the painting aside, such works reveal the limited degree to which the Kanō-based arts alone could contribute to the creation of a more modern art form. This scroll was exhibited at the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair.

39

Hishida Shunsō, 1874–1911

Forest in the Evening, 1904
(Yūbe no mori)

Hanging scroll: color on silk
44.5×60 cm.
Iida City Museum

40

Hishida Shunsō, 1874–1911

Returning Woodcutters, 1906
(Kishō)

Hanging scroll: color on silk
49.5×70.3 cm.
Iida City Museum

Despite the harsh judgment of outside critics who condemned his paintings as *mōrō-tai* or "hazy style," Shunsō continued to explore the use of color to express the spatial and atmospheric effects of painting. Accompanying Okakura Tenshin on a trip to America in 1904, Shunsō and his colleague Yokoyama Taikan toured the East Coast, exhibiting their paintings in four major cities. *Forest in the Evening*, which Shunsō painted in the States and exhibited in Boston, reveals the remarkable degree to which he would strip away line to express the twilight ambiance of trees fading to shadow against a paling sky. In 1906, Shunsō painted *Returning Woodcutters,* which depicts a mist-laden landscape under a luminous twilight sky.



39



40

41

Takeuchi Seihō, 1864–1942

Moon over Venice, c.1905–1910
(Benisu no tsuki)

Hanging scroll: cut velvet
234×177 cm.
British Museum, London

42

Yamamoto Shunkyo, 1871–1933

Snow in the Rockies, c.1905–1910
(Rokkī-san no yuki)

Hanging scroll: cut velvet
234×177 cm.
British Museum, London

43

Takeuchi Seihō, 1864–1942

Moon over Venice, 1904
(Benisu no tsuki)

Hanging scroll: ink on paper
220×174.5 cm.
Takashimaya Historical Museum, Osaka

44

Yamamoto Shunkyo, 1871–1933

Snow in the Rockies, 1905
(Rokkī-san no yuki)

Hanging scroll: ink and light color on paper
221.1×174.5 cm.
Takashimaya Historical Museum, Osaka

The Osaka department store Takashimaya commissioned three Kyoto painters, Takeuchi Seihō, Yamamoto Shunkyo, and Tsuji Kakō, to contribute a composition each on the theme *Three Views of the World*. Seihō's *Moon over Venice* represented Europe, Shunkyo's *Snow in the Rockies* stood for the New World of America, and Kakō's *Cherry Blossoms at Yoshino* represented Asia. These three paintings served as full-scale, precisely detailed studies that were exactly reproduced by Takashimaya in cut-velvet (*birōdo yūzen*). The images were copied onto wall hangings by the technique of *yūzen*, a rice-paste resist dyeing method that allows painterly designs and patterns to be reproduced on fabrics. The textiles were later exhibited at the 1910 Japan-British Exhibition in London. In 1994, the British Museum acquired the two original textile wall hangings by Seihō and Shunkyo.

In *Moon over Venice*, Seihō painted a nocturne, a moonlight view of the late-seventeenth-century Church of Santa Maria della Salute near the entrance to the Grand Canal in Venice. Based on sketches done during his tour of Europe in 1900–1901, the scene is rendered in the ink landscape tradition of gradated washes and atmospheric perspective, while the white marble domes of the church are depicted from a single point of view and with light and reflections from a single source.

In *Snow in the Rockies*, Shunkyo created an immediacy by combining the verisimilitude of photography with the realistic Maruyama-Shijō style. From his youth, Shunkyo had studied photography, and he quickly incorporated into his paintings the modern perspectives of the camera. This monochromatic rendering of the Rocky Mountains was painted in *aizumi*, a mixture of ink and indigo blue; the restricted palette, in combination with a selective realism and atmospheric effects, created an image in accord with both traditional ink painting and the familiar gray tones of early twentieth-century photography. Shunkyo probably painted the scroll within months of returning to Japan after a tour of the United States.



41



42



43



44



45 *Egrets in a Tree at Night*



Duck



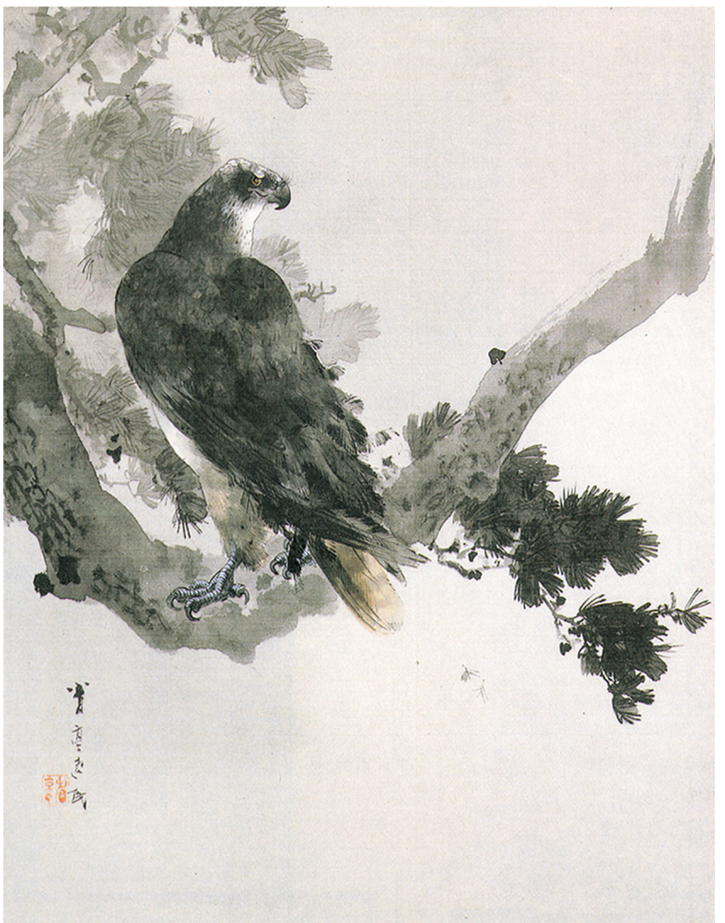
46



47



Pigeons in a Tree



Eagle in a Tree

45

Watanabe Seitei, 1851–1918

Album of Birds and Flowers, Fish and Fowl: Egrets in a Tree at Night, Duck, Pigeons in a Tree, Eagle in a Tree,
c.1905–1912
(Kachō gyoko gasatsu)

Album leaves: ink and color on silk
35.8×27.8 cm. each
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Charles Stewart Smith Collection, Gift of Mrs. Charles Stewart Smith, Charles Stewart Smith, Jr., and Howard Caswell Smith, in memory of Charles Stewart Smith, 1914, 14.75.61.42, 14.75.61.44, 14.75.61.46, 14.75.61.60

Best known as a bird-and-flower painter, Seitei depicted landscapes as well as figures and was also a brilliant illustrator and designer. Painting with a flawless technique, Seitei introduced startlingly new color combinations to traditional themes. This album exemplifies the fine quality of Seitei's facile brushwork and the refined washes and coloration that complement his inventive compositions.

46

Watanabe Seitei, 1851–1918
Namikawa Sōsuke, 1847–1910

Tray with Egret, c.1895
(Shirasagi zu bon)

Tray: cloisonné
Height 27.7 cm.
Khalili Collection, London

47

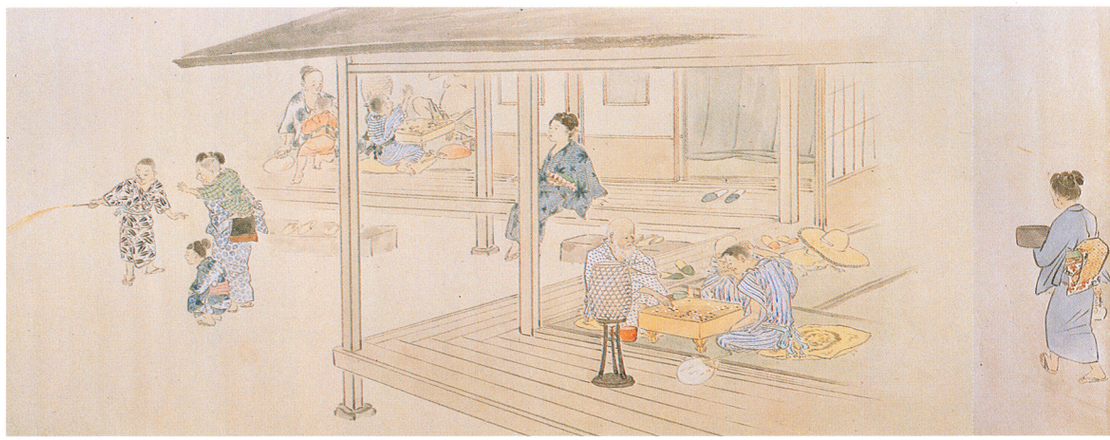
Namikawa Sōsuke, 1847–1910

Tray with Goose Against the Moon,
c.1900 or later
(Tsuki ni kari zu bon)

Tray: cloisonné
28.5×28.5 cm.
Khalili Collection, London

A versatile painter, Seitei was equally renowned as a designer. His works were so innovative and yet so appealing that his designs were popular among printmakers and craftsmen with whom he often collaborated. His artworks were among those used by the award-winning Imperial Household Artist Namikawa Sōsuke in a series of enamel trays that bore reproductions of works by celebrated painters. Sōsuke excelled in the making of *musen shippō* or "wireless cloisonné." While not entirely wireless, his works resort to the use of wire cloisons only to render the finest details. The design of *Goose Against the Moon* is, though not signed by the artist, most likely by Seitei.







48

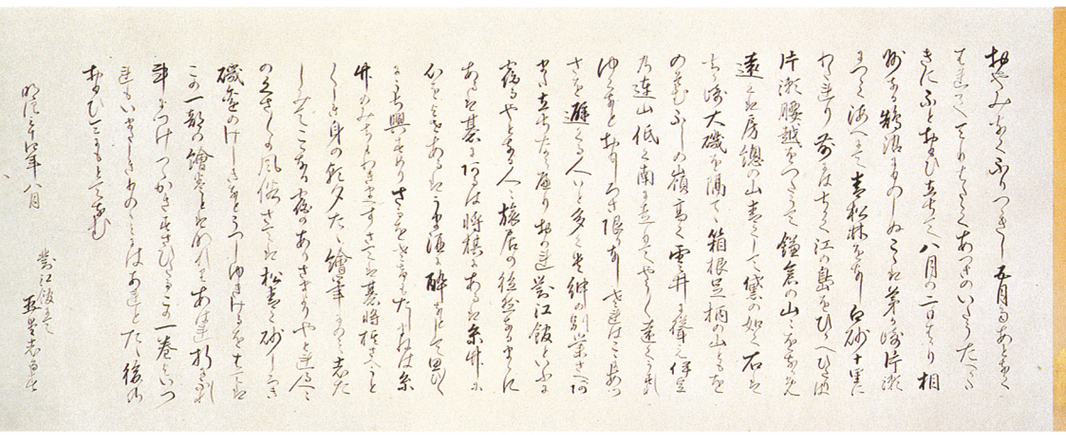
Kawai Gyokudō, 1873–1957

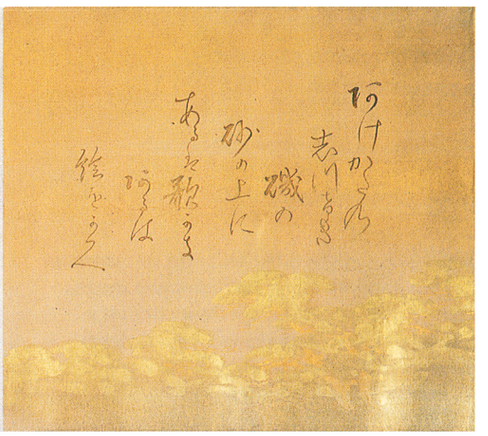
Bracing Breezes, Cool Waves, 1901

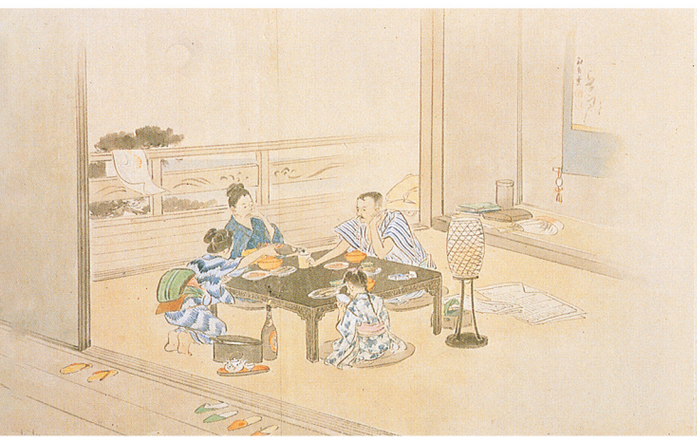
(Seifū ryōha)

Handscroll: ink and color on paper
31.5×638 cm.
The Museum of Fine Arts, Gifu

Gyokudō found a few days of respite from the summer heat of 1901 by visiting a resort on the Shōnan Shore, the temperate coastal area that includes Sagami Bay, Kamakura, and Ōiso along the old Tōkaidō road. The holiday mood of the artist is evident in his relaxed and casual paintings of fellow vacationers, families who are seen together playing, eating, and bathing and whose activities reflect Victorian sensibilities such as bathing fully clothed. Gyokudō, who was known for his skillful blending of Kanō and Maruyama-Shijō styles, here reveals himself as a keenly observant contemporary figure, comfortable with the informal and seemingly effortless recording of the simple pleasures and pastimes of his day while capturing the nostalgia of a bygone era.



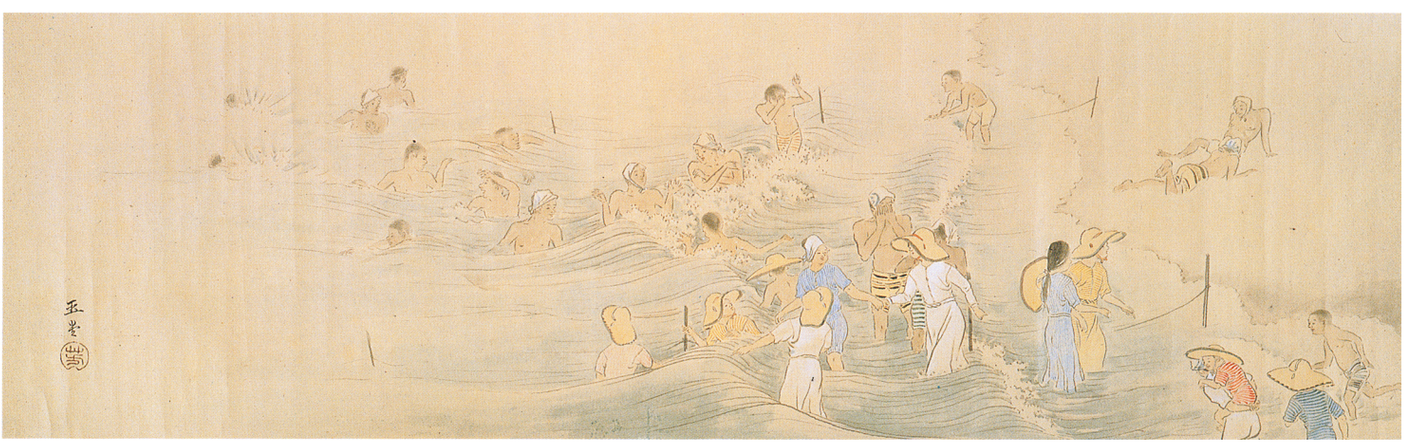












49

Takeuchi Seihō, 1864–1942

Desolation, 1904
(Shōjō)

Pair of six-panel screens: color on silk
167.5×372 cm. each
The National Museum of Modern Art, Kyoto

Seihō's use of the title *Desolation* conjures up a traditional theme in literature and drama. The broken and unkempt trees convey a sense of neglect and absence that is deepened by shrouding mists. As an expression of *mono no aware*, the painting expresses the profound sadness inherent in the world, and its further manifestation in *sabi*, the quality of beauty that arises from loneliness, solitude, and quiet. This theme was treated by Shiokawa Bunrin and Kishi Chikudō before Seihō and later by Hishida Shunsō, all of whom were attracted to the aesthetic idea and its portrayal in their art. Seihō effectively uses atmosphere and light to convey not only mood and the transmutation of nature, but also a readable sense of distance.











50

Hishida Shunsō, 1874–1911

***Fallen Leaves*, 1909**
(Ochiba)

Two-panel screen: color on silk
151×164 cm.
The Museum of Modern Art, Shiga

At the third Bunten competition, Shunsō entered a pair of six-panel screens entitled *Fallen Leaves*. With the tenacious support of his colleague Yokoyama Taikan, who was on the judging panel, Shunsō was awarded top honors for the painting. Shunsō executed six versions in various formats, including two hanging scrolls, before creating the final painting, which is widely recognized as one of the masterpieces of *Nihonga*. The two-panel screen included in this exhibition was the very first screen in the series. In this limpid and translucent vision, an autumn scene is depicted with clarity and a significant inclusion of outline.

51

Yokoyama Taikan, 1868–1958

Mountain Path, 1911
(Yamaji)

Hanging scroll: color on silk
159.6×70.9 cm.
The National Museum of Modern Art, Kyoto

Unlike Taikan's earlier so-called *mōrō-tai* (hazy-style) works, *Mountain Path* emerges from the considerably lightened palette of both his figural and landscape paintings. While the brighter, more opaque colors suggest *Yamato-e* and Rinpa sources, the subject and composition of this work are closely related to Edo period *bunjin-ga* (literati painting) such as the work of Kino Baitei (1734–1810). Although Taikan relinquishes the calligraphic line favored in literati painting, he deliberately and ingeniously invokes a literati character by emphasizing the brush, especially in the foreground autumn foliage rendered in broad, rough, textured strokes of varying density. This visually more lucid and orderly picture is one of several versions; another painting, also dated 1911, was shown at the fifth Bunten.

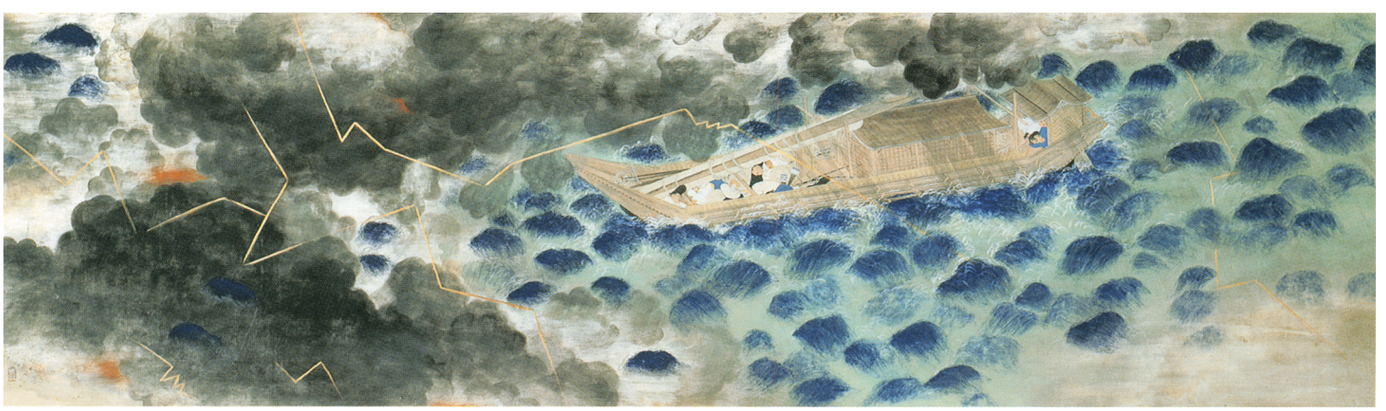


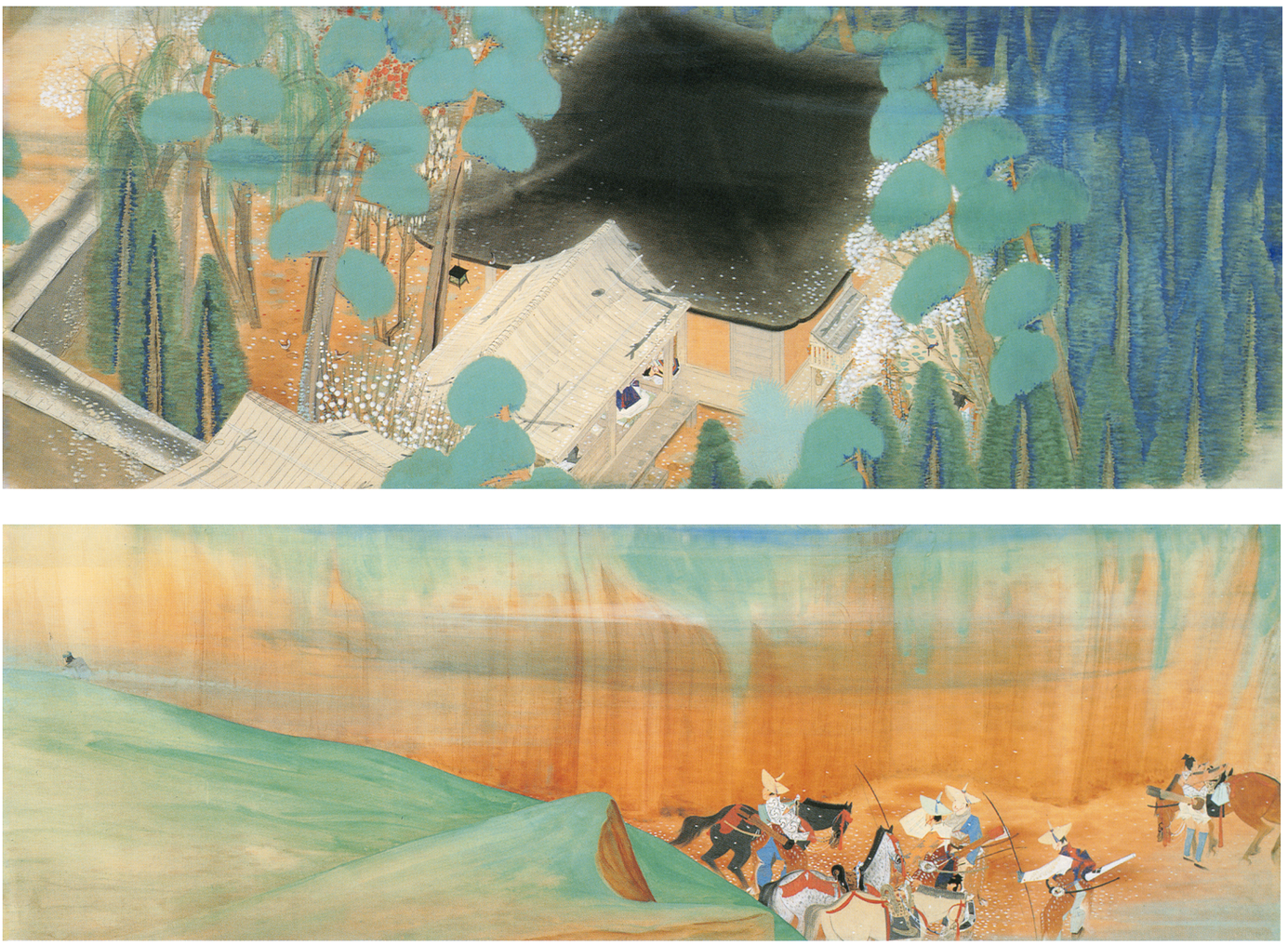
Receptivity and Response: Traditional Sources and Themes

Towards the end of the Meiji era, artists became more discerning in their receptivity to domestic and foreign influences, more discriminating in their response to cultural and formal challenges. This is evident in their resourceful utilization of a series of long-established themes. Early literary texts had long been a major source of thematic material which modern artists felt free to represent in a variety of styles and formats. Their treatment of Buddhist subject matter ranged from iconographically accurate depictions of deities to imaginative evocations of syncretic themes. Popular legends, folk tales, and symbolic animal representations readily lent themselves to ebullient and sophisticated parody. Often the commingling of past and present in depictions of traditional festivals and ancient monuments lent poignancy to the nostalgic yearnings of a people caught in the throes of rapid and relentless change. (EPC)

52
Kobayashi Kokei, 1883–1957
Shipwreck, 1917
(Nanpa)
Framed: color on paper
45.5×153 cm.
The Museum of Modern Art, Shiga

So famous is the tenth-century *Tale of the Bamboo Cutter* (Taketori monogatari) that a passage in the *Tale of Genji* (Genji monogatari) a century later described the story as "the archetype and parent of all romance." Based on a Chinese legend, the novel tells the story of a bamboo cutter who finds a treasure of gold and a beautiful supernatural being. Raised as his daughter, she becomes the Shining Princess. She challenges each of her five noble suitors with a fantastic quest, including the enamored Ōtomo who must search for a fabulous jewel set about a dragon's neck. This work, an enlargement of a scene from the smaller handscroll Kokei created in the same year, depicts Ōtomo upon a perilous sea in search of the dragon-borne gem.





Details

53

Maeda Seison, 1885–1977

Handscroll of Koremori at Mount Kōya, 1918

(Koremori Kōya no maki)

Handscroll: color on paper
47.5×1615.5 cm.
Tokyo National Museum

In preparation for this handscroll in the *Yamato-e* style, Seison walked from Mount Kōya to Kumano, retracing the political and spiritual flight of the samurai Taira no Koremori (1158–1184) who, in despair that his grandfather Taira no Kiyomori (1118–1181) had plunged the country into civil war, renounced the world and entered the Buddhist priesthood. Koremori later drowned himself in the lake near the three shrines of Kumano, in one of the most celebrated suicides in Japanese literature as told in the epic war romance, *Tale of the Heike* (Heike monogatari).



54

54

Tomioka Tessai, 1836–1924

The Founders of Three Faiths Crossing the Sea, 1921

(Kyōso tokai zu)

Hanging scroll: ink and light color on paper
146.3×40.2 cm.
The National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo

During his later years, Tessai frequently painted the literary and religious theme based on the unity of the Three Doctrines (Confucianism, Daoism, and Buddhism). Here Tessai powerfully expresses its artistic force and philosophical dimension. The Doctrines are personified by their founders, Confucius, Laozi, Shakyamuni, Avalokiteśvara, and Bodhidharma all together in a boat with a tiller. Tessai portrays the ancient, yet luminous ecumenical harmony of the Asian religious and philosophical traditions calmly and surely charting a course through the physical and spiritual threats of a contracting world.

56

Tomioka Tessai, 1836–1924
Kiyomizu Rokubei, IV, 1848–1920

Sencha Teapot with Figure Painting, 1905–1914

(Jinbutsu-e sometsuke kyūsu)

Teapot: white porcelain, underglaze blue painting
height 7.6 cm.
Kiyoshikōjin Seichōji, Takarazuka

57

Tomioka Tessai, 1836–1924
Kiyomizu Rokubei, V, 1875–1959

Sencha Teacups with Longevity Symbols, 1920

(Sōju sen-nen etsuke sencha-wan)

Five teacups: white porcelain, underglaze blue painting
height 4.5 cm. each
Kiyoshikōjin Seichōji, Takarazuka

Among the important literati pursuits in Kyoto was *sencha*, the appreciation of tea steeped in a small pot and served as a potent concoction in tiny cups. The practice, brought from China during the seventeenth century by emigre Zen Buddhist monks, influenced the development of literati culture in Japan. Working with the famous Kyoto family of potters, Tessai depicts on the teapot a scholar at his leisure next to a brazier and boiling pot. The five teacups are decorated with cranes and pines, symbols of longevity.

55

Tomioka Tessai, 1836–1924

Zhongkui Marrying Off His Sister, 1918
(Shōki kamai zu)

Framed: color on silk
19.5×57.9 cm.
Kiyoshikōjin Seichōji, Takarazuka

58

Tomioka Tessai, 1836–1924

Fan Painting with Narcissus, 1921
(Ōgi suisen zu)

Folding fan: color on paper
16.5×49.4 cm.
Kiyoshikōjin Seichōji, Takarazuka

Although small in surface, the arching shape of the fan format poses various challenges to the artistry and inventiveness of the painter. In the lavish and powerful composition of *Zhongkui Marrying Off His Sister*, Tessai depicts the legendary "Demon Queller" astride a deer, accompanying his beautiful sister to her wedding. In the dynamic composition of *Narcissus*, he combines the flower which is the literary symbol for the new year with bamboo, one of the Four Noble Plants, to express a wish for health and longevity in the year ahead.



55



58



56



57



59

Imamura Shikō, 1880–1916

Dragon and Tiger, c.1912
(Ryūko)

Pair of hanging scrolls: color on silk
127.5×20.3 cm. each
Private collection

The dragon and tiger were favorite subjects of Kanō and Maruyama-Shijō painters, whose sources for the motifs included early Chinese and Japanese Zen Buddhist scrolls in which the animals symbolized "clouds and wind." In time, the beasts came to represent the human spirit enlightened by the majesty of Buddhism. Shikō depicts both creatures in an exaggeratedly narrow composition influenced by *ukiyo-e* pillar prints and slender *tanzaku*; their taut, curvilinear forms are enlivened and made folkishly humorous by their abbreviation and comical expressions. Stylistically derived from early Rinpa, notably the work of Tawaraya Sōtatsu (d.1643?), the beasts in *Dragon and Tiger* are energetically and elegantly rendered with the most sumptuous materials in keeping with the lavishly decorative tradition.



60

Takeuchi Seihō, 1864–1942

Drunken Pleasures, 1924
(Suikyō)

Hanging scroll: color on paper
60×48 cm.
Kyoto Municipal Museum of Art

The aesthetic sensibility of Seihō's *Drunken Pleasures* is likened to *senryū*, a form of poetry in which the comedic ironies of daily life are set to short verse. The inebriated antics of the green-eyed cat and bowl-bearing mouse are drawn from *Ōtsu-e*, roughly rendered pictures in ink and plain color which were sold as souvenirs to pilgrims and travellers to Miidera Temple at Ōtsu. The Japanese cat, mouse, and sake gourd are all given equal weight, suggesting that the enjoyment and fulfillment of one is dependent on the others. This spontaneous and witty painting suggests the expressive depth and technical range of Seihō's oeuvre.



61

Maeda Seison, 1885–1977

The Animals' Ball, 1958

(Dōbutsu no butōkai)

Framed: ink and light color on paper
52.2×87.5 cm.
Private collection

The monochromatic treatment and caricature of human activity in *The Animals' Ball* brings to mind its famous precursor, *Caricatures of Animals* (Chōjū giga), a set of four scrolls dating from the twelfth to thirteenth centuries belonging to the Kōzanji collection in Kyoto, in which human activities are irreverently acted out by hosts of the animal world. Most likely inspired by the wrestling match between a rabbit and frog who are locked in a *jūdō*-like embrace in the Kōzanji paintings, Seison's delightful cotillion is filled with mammalian and reptilian drinkers, musicians, and dancers.

62

Irie Hakō, 1887–1948

Mañjuśrī Mounted on Lion, 1940
(Shishi-jō son)

Hanging scroll: ink and light color on paper
64.2×43.7 cm.
Adachi Museum of Art, Yasugi

In 1939, Hakō, Yasuda Yukihiko, and several other artists were chosen to copy the early eighth-century Buddhist murals of the Main Hall of Hōryūji Temple (established 607). Preoccupied with the Hōryūji project, Hakō is said to have had little time to do his own work. This scroll is the exception. Painted in 1940, the artist depicts Mañjuśrī Bodhisattva, the Buddhist deity who personifies the supreme wisdom of the Buddha. He wields the sword with which he dispels the clouds of ignorance and holds a lotus of purity. A guardian of the sacred doctrines, Mañjuśrī is portrayed surmounting a lion, the kingly power of Buddha's wisdom.





63

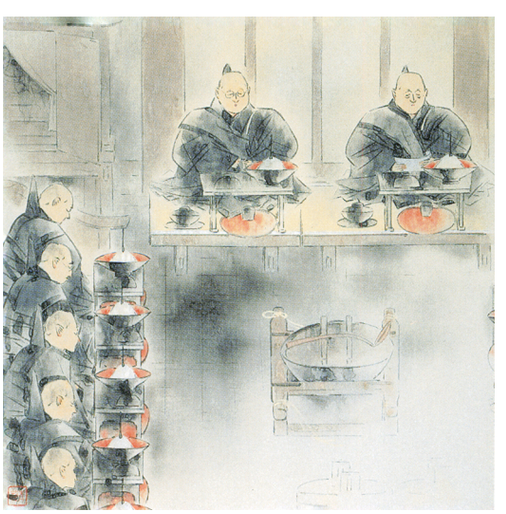
Maeda Seison, 1885–1977

Water Drawing Ceremony, 1959
(Omizutori)

Handscroll: color on paper
45.5×1243.1 cm.
Hiraki Ukiyo-e Museum, Yokohama

The Water Drawing Ceremony marking the end of winter has taken place at the Nigatsudō, a sub-temple of the great Tōdaiji temple in Nara for over 1200 years. The Nigatsudō was built in 752 by the priest Jitchū, the chief disciple of Rōben (689–773), who was the first abbot of the temple. Seison attended the March rites and recorded them in seventeen scenes, from the chanting of scripture before the golden Thousand-Armed Kannon, through the climactic fire festival, to the post-festival tranquillity. For sheer technical bravura, Seison's pictures are superb; his brushwork and ink wash, his closely keyed tonality, and his sparse use of color enhance the narrative effect of this scroll.







Details



64

Kawabata Ryūshi, 1885–1966

Dream, 1951
(Yume)

Framed: color on paper
151.5×242.4 cm.
Ryūshi Memorial Art Museum of Ōta-ku, Tokyo

In 1951, Ryūshi took a trip following the seventeenth-century itinerary of the Edo-period author and poet Matsuo Bashō (1644–1694), who described a cross-island journey in his greatest prose piece, *The Narrow Road through the Provinces* (Oku no hosomichi, 1702). While en route, the artist learned of the mummified remains of three generations of the ancient Fujiwara family kept at the Hiraizumi Chūsonji, a temple deep in northern Honshū. The macabre notion of aristocratic exhumation prompted the artist to depict a desiccated body in an open coffin from which softly issue the brightly powdered, fluttering wings of moths.

Receptivity and Response: Literati Tradition and Ink Painting

Literati painting, called *nanga* or *bunjin-ga*, developed in China among scholars as part of a cultivated life that included the study of history, literature, poetry, and calligraphy. Painting was a personal expression and an endeavor to be shared with like-minded, scholarly individuals. Literati artists eschewed decorative, highly colored works in favor of monochromatic ink paintings rendered with expressive brushwork derived from calligraphy. The term literati later came to designate a distinct scholarly class of amateur painters and a style identified with them. In Japan, however, when literati painting was introduced in the late seventeenth century, it was taken up by not only Confucian scholars but also Buddhist monks, professional artists, military officers, physicians, and merchants. These artists shared the spiritual and intellectual values and ideals of the literati tradition which continues as a significant style in *Nihonga*. (SDO)



65

65

Tomioka Tessai, 1836–1924

***Red Plums*, 1923**
(Shubai zu)

Hanging scroll: ink and light color on paper
150.4×40.1 cm.
Kiyoshikōjin Seichōji, Takarazuka

Tessai identified himself with the quintessential literati figure, Su Shi (1036–1101). To celebrate his own 88th birthday, Tessai painted this work and noted in the inscription that he and Su Shi were born in the same month on the same day. Moreover, they both shared a fondness for painting red plum blossoms, the emblem of scholars. *Red Plums* thus reveals the intimate extent of Tessai's reverence for the Chinese poet. Executed in bold and vigorous yet effortless brushwork, *Red Plums* also reflects the literati precepts that the truly cultivated man is spontaneous and natural, unencumbered and fully expressive of his nature and feelings.

66

Tomioka Tessai, 1836–1924

***The Red Cliff*, 1922**
(Zen Sekiheki zu)

Hanging scroll: ink and light color on paper
156×43.6 cm.
Kiyoshikōjin Seichōji, Takarazuka

In 1922, Tessai painted *The Red Cliff* in celebration of the 840th anniversary of Su Shi's famous prose-poem, *Former Ode on the Red Cliff*, in which the eminent Chinese scholar and poet recounted his visit to the historic site along the Yangtze River in 1082. Like many of his paintings of Su Shi, Tessai depicts the literatus with friends, here about to board a boat for their moonlit journey by the ancient cliffs. The anniversary of the Red Cliff was so important to Tessai that he celebrated it by attending a memorial gathering by the Uji River, organized by two of his friends. He painted this scroll and another on the subject as gifts to his thoughtful colleagues.



66



67

Tomita Keisen, 1879–1936

Handscroll of the Uji River: Kowata, 1915
(Ujigawa no maki: Kowata)

Handscroll: color on silk
50.4×524.6 cm.
The Museum of Modern Art, Shiga

Keisen, who came from Fukuoka to study with the Shijō painter Tsuji Kakō, lived forty years in Kyoto and knew its environs well. Here in the nearby misty hills of Kowata, he depicts villages and the tea cultivation for which Uji is renowned. Using a literati style and the colored washes of the Shijō tradition, Keisen expresses the "new *nanga*" and sets a rhythmical pattern of rolling countryside dotted with low, rounded bushes of tea. Broad areas of the fields are hidden under bamboo blinds that shield the plants from the sun. This scroll is one of an original set of four that included views of Ujibashi and Fushimi, from which one scroll has been lost.



68

Tomita Keisen, 1879–1936

Cherry Blossoms at Night in Gion, 1921
(Gion yozakura)

Hanging scroll: color on silk
48.3×70.8 cm.
Yokoyama Taikan Memorial Hall, Tokyo

From the Edo to Shōwa periods, Gion flourished as an elegant pleasure district in Kyoto where the cultural traditions and customs of the geisha provided distraction and inspiration for generations of artists. Each April, the traditional Cherry Dance was performed in observance of cherry blossom season. Keisen sets the dramatically blooming trees beneath the shadowed boughs of the tall pines at the base of Higashiyama. Illuminated by fires hung in iron baskets from tree branches, the delicate white flowers shimmer incandescent against the looming ink-washed mountain and extend the enjoyment of the short-lived blossoms well into the night.



69



70



71

69

Ogawa Usen, 1868–1938

Fox Procession, 1930
(Kotaikō)

Hanging scroll: color on paper
45.3×62.5 cm.
The Museum of Modern Art, Ibaraki

70

Ogawa Usen, 1868–1938

Imps in the Field, 1929
(Hatake no obake)

Hanging scroll: color on silk
42.2×57.5 cm.
Private collection

Usen was known for his humorous pictures of imps and mountain spirits, especially the legendary *kappa*—scaly, amphibious creatures believed to inhabit the swamps of Ushiku-numa, where the artist lived in Ibaraki. Usen, who was a newspaper illustrator and cartoonist, began painting in the literati style (*nanga*) around 1917. An avid composer of *haiku*, he must have appreciated *nanga*'s long literary associations and the immediacy of expression afforded by its direct brushwork. In these playful paintings, Usen offers the viewer unsettling and fanciful apparitions of a traditional procession of fox spirits by torch light, and melons and vegetables parading beneath a waning moon.

71

Kosugi Hōan, 1881–1964

Passage Through the Mountain, c.1940
(Yamayuki)

Set of four *fusuma*: color on paper
176.8×91.8 cm. each
Sōkenji, Azuchi

Hōan was an oil painter who won an award for his work, *Waterside Village* (Suigō), at the 1911 Bunten. He was one of several painters who studied *yōga* but subsequently turned to *Nihonga*. Instead of continuing with Western-style oils after returning from a year in Europe in 1913, he began to paint in traditional media, eventually adopting the literati style and its distinctly Japanese forms and themes. In later paintings such as this *Passage Through the Mountain*, Hōan's highly refined and individualistic brushwork distinguishes him from all other literati artists. His masterfully composed paintings are marked by an extraordinary elegance in both tonality and technique: colors are muted and mottled and as varied as his brushwork, which appears as stippling and drybrush.



72

Yokoyama Taikan, 1868–1958

Spring Dawn over the Holy Mountain of Chichibu, 1928

(Chichibu reihō shungyō)

Hanging scroll: ink and gold wash on silk
67.2×113.5 cm.
Household of Princess Chichibu

The Kantō range is known for deep woodlands and scenic valleys as well as its beautiful mountains. In the town of Chichibu, there is an ancient Shintō shrine where each December the ritual *kagura*, or dance of divinities, is performed. In preparation for this painting, Taikan travelled to the sacred mountain and visited the priest of Chichibu Shrine who had commissioned the work. Done in ink and gold washes in a nearly lineless manner, the painting portrays the mountain and environs silhouetted in rising misty clouds and dawning skies. The painting was presented by the Shrine to the late Prince Chichibu, brother to the late Shōwa Emperor, in commemoration of the establishment of the prince's household.



73

Hirafuku Hyakusui, 1877–1933

Highland, 1931

(Kōgen)

Hanging scroll: color on paper

72×92 cm.

The National Museum of Modern Art, Kyoto

On his return from a European tour the year before, Hyakusui painted this landscape of pines and grasses in a manner resembling a European alpine scene. This work is animated by the literati style as practiced by Hyakusui's many contemporaries. The naturalism, coloration, and proportions of his composition can be attributed to the lasting impact of both Shijō style, which he acquired through his father, Hirafuku Suian (1844–1890), and *yōga* to which he was predisposed through the Dutch-influenced studies which included pictorial realism that flourished in his native Akita Prefecture from the eighteenth century onwards. This work was painted in the year Hyakusui was appointed professor at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts (Tokyo Bijutsu Gakkō) in 1931.



74

Murakami Kagaku, 1888–1939

Arhat, 1939
(Rakan)

Hanging scroll: ink on paper
41.2×27.6 cm.
Private collection

Buddhist subjects were a favored and constant part of Kagaku's repertoire right up until his death. Many of his figural works were done in a variety of styles, from fine line to wet-on-wet, that produced evocative depictions of Buddhas, bodhisattvas, and other deities. This work is especially interesting for its cursory use of line and visual brevity to suggest the voluminous robes of this Buddhist disciple. Such brushwork is directly related to Zen painting in which the depth of the artist's understanding is conveyed in large measure by the intensity and spontaneity of his brushstrokes.



75

Murakami Kagaku, 1888–1939

Ink Peony, c.1930
(Sumi botan no zu)

Hanging scroll: ink on silk
34.7×42.4 cm.
The National Museum of Modern Art, Kyoto

The peony was introduced to Japan from China in both its herbaceous and woody forms and continues to be a popular plant because of its large showy blooms. The more ornamental varieties have extremely lush flowers with petals opening in thick layers; these were favored by artists who were challenged by the complexity of the floral forms and the subtleties of their color. Painted after his move to Kobe, *Ink Peony,* done in a severely restricted palette almost entirely of ink (*sumi*), reveals Kagaku's technical mastery of his medium to suggest the "color" of the flower through his sensitive brush and ink and gold washes.

Receptivity and Response: *Bijin-ga*

Bijin-ga, or the painting of beautiful women, evolved from seventeenth-century Japanese genre painting. The subject was later popular among *ukiyo-e* painters and print artists. In *Nihonga*, *ukiyo-e* provided artists a rich source of both subjects and style on which to base innovative and inspired departures from the older tradition. In contrast to the courtesans of the pleasure quarters favored in *ukiyo-e*, *Nihonga* artists introduced the depiction of women from different social classes and backgrounds, from the ordinary housewife to the debutante and even historical and foreign beauties. Moreover, a greater degree of expressiveness distinguishes the women represented in *Nihonga*, their beauty reflectively sedate or emotionally charged, depending on the theme. (SDO)



76
Takeuchi Seihō, 1864–1942
Sudden Shower, 1909
(Are yūdachi ni)
Hanging scroll: color on silk
165.7×84.3 cm.
Takashimaya Historical Museum, Osaka

Seihō, who was best known for his landscapes, astonished everyone at the third Bunten exhibition with *Sudden Shower*, a work considered among the very first of the artist's figure paintings. The striking pose of the *maiko* (young geisha) who hides her face behind a fan is taken from a scene in a Kabuki play. He irreverently depicts an ink landscape of stream and willows on a wide hanging sash, in unusually muted colors for a *maiko*. The visually stunning gold and red accents provide both highlights and contrast to the *maiko* and her provocative dress.



77

Tsuchida Bakusen, 1887–1936

Hair, c.1911
(Kami)

Hanging scroll: color on silk
76.9×85.8 cm.
University Art Museum of
Kyoto City University of Arts

In 1911, Bakusen presented *Hair* as his graduation piece to the Kyoto Municipal Special School of Painting (Kyoto Shiritsu Kaiga Senmon Gakkō). The painting won first prize at the school exhibition and was later purchased by his alma mater. The intimate scene of a woman at her toilette shows how accomplished the young artist was in utilizing formal pictorial elements and the fashionable naturalistic mode while employing to sensational advantage the more sensual and seductive aspects of the traditional *bijin* theme. Capitalizing on its success, Bakusen exhibited the painting at the April exhibition of Le Masque, then entered it yet again to the fifth Bunten, where the artist was awarded a certificate of merit.



78

Kitano Tsunetomi, 1880–1947

Feeling Warm, 1915
(Atataka)

Framed: color on silk
185.6×112 cm.
The Museum of Modern Art, Shiga

Tsunetomi excelled as a painter of beautiful women. His works such as *Feeling Warm* were noted for the natural sensualism of both figure and fabrics. The direct and questioning gaze of the young courtesan as well as her languorous form beneath the sumptuous undergarment are mildly suggestive and characterize the distinct and erotically expressive tone in the artist's early works. Tsunetomi's technique—the thick layering of pigment—is somewhat unusual for this genre and may be due in part to the artist's wide interest in other media and art forms.



79

Uemura Shōen, 1875–1949

Preparing to Dance, 1914
(Mai-jitaku)

Two-panel screen: color on silk
160×188 cm.
Collection of Toda Shunzō

During the Taishō era, Shōen took her painting themes from literature as well as the artistic activities that engaged the orthodox, culturally sophisticated families of contemporary Kyoto. *Preparing to Dance* is a definitive example of the artist's portrayals of young, upper-class women trained in the traditional arts of music and dance. Her impeccably dressed figures are conservative models of unblemished feminine beauty: gentle and poised, refined in manner and taste, and immaculately groomed. Shōen's brushwork, noticeably distinct from the calligraphic lines of her earlier Meiji-period works, is smooth and flowing, complementing her change in palette to brighter colors and tones. This composition, which was shown at the eighth Bunten, exists in another, later version.



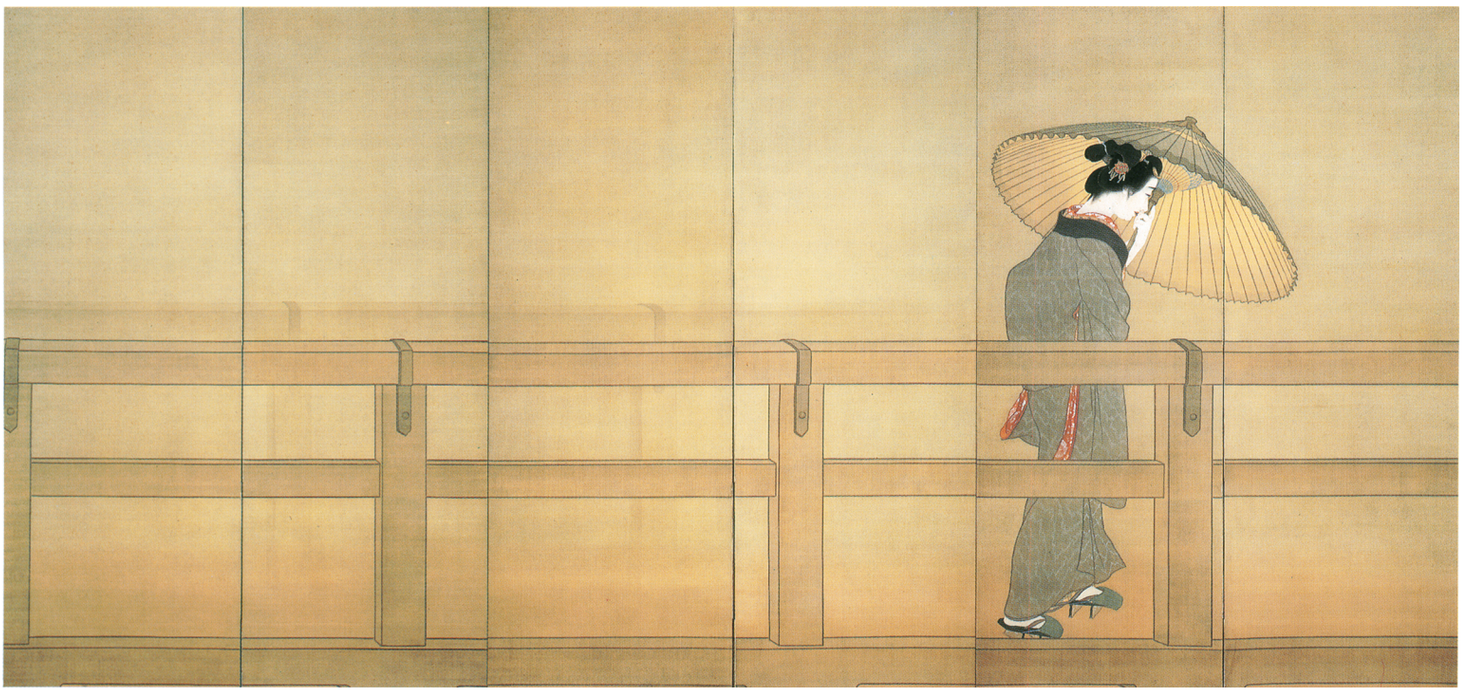
80

Shimomura Kanzan, 1873–1930

Spring Rain, 1916
(Harusame)

Pair of six-panel screens: color on silk
190×406 cm. each
Tokyo National Museum

For the costumes, coiffures, and customs shown in this screen, Kanzan looked back to the Edo period. Although devoid of raindrops, the diluted inks and softened colors of his muted palette provide for a richly atmospheric scene of scattered sunlight filtered through a passing spring shower. The saturated, shimmering effect of the surface is created by *urahaku*, gold foils applied to the back of the silk ground. The use of rain as a theme by Meiji artists like Kanzan and his contemporaries reflects a continuing interest in the effect of light and atmosphere, which began in experimental fashion in the art of Shiokawa Bunrin.





81

Tsuchida Bakusen, 1887–1936

The Flat Bed, 1933

(Heishō)

Framed: color on silk
152.5×209.5 cm.
Kyoto Municipal Museum of Art

Like the Japanese geisha, the *kisaeng* of Korea are traditional courtesans skilled in music and dance. *The Flat Bed* was inspired by a trip that Bakusen took to Korea from May to July of 1933. Shown in traditional folk dress, the *kisaeng* wear pure white ramie-linen and are rendered in the refined and elegant linear fashion of *Yamato-e* monochrome ink line painting. The compositional structure is reminiscent of the ancient Chinese figural tradition. This painting is typical of Bakusen's depictions of women; whether village divers, wood gatherers, or *maiko* (young geisha), Bakusen treated his figures with a sympathetic eye and showed the dignity of their lives. Basing it on sketches done during his trip, Bakusen completed the painting in time for the fourteenth Teiten in October.

82

Kikuchi Keigetsu, 1879–1955

Blackened Teeth, 1933
(Hagurome)

Framed: color on paper
159.5×76.5 cm.
The National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo

Keigetsu was Kyoto's foremost modern advocate of *Yamato-e*, the painting of Japanese themes and subjects in a native style. He excelled in accurately detailed historical paintings of figures, revealing an encyclopedic knowledge of techniques, themes, styles, and traditions, such as the Momoyama (1568–1600) customs and dress depicted in *Blackened Teeth*. Women observed the practice of blackening teeth (*ohaguro*) for health and beauty from the eighth through the nineteenth centuries. The elegance of this woman's features and dress are subtly reinforced by the restrained and highly refined monochromatic ink line painting, a Tosa-school style intimately associated with the literary epitome of *Yamato-e* themes, the *Tale of Genji*.





83

Uemura Shōen, 1875–1949

Waiting for the Moon, 1926
(Machizuki)

Hanging scroll: color on silk
194×100.6 cm.
Kyoto Municipal Museum of Art

During the Taishō period, Shōen's paintings of beautiful women that had won her much praise began to be criticized for failing to express individuality and emotion in their figures. From 1918 to 1926, Shōen withdrew from public exhibition to concentrate on private commissions. She ended this hiatus with her entry of *Waiting for the Moon* at the Teiten exhibition. Based on motifs found in *ukiyo-e*, Shōen indulges in visual puns—fan, chignon, and sash—on the round shape of the unseen but eagerly expected moon. Shōen's artistic and technical skills are revealed by the stunning treatment of the figure's red and white tortoiseshell-patterned under-robe seen through her sheer green kimono. Furthermore, the rabbits in gold on the sash are a reminder of the ancient belief that an immortal hare lives on the moon.

84

Uemura Shōen, 1875–1949

Late Autumn, 1943
(Banshū)

Framed: color on silk
180.5×86 cm.
Osaka Municipal Museum of Art

During the war years, a subtle shift evolved in the themes of Shōen's paintings. In place of the genteel beauties absorbed in artistic accomplishments and leisurely cultural pursuits, Shōen painted scenes of honest domesticity among the middle class. At the same time, her works acquired a formal spareness accomplished by a reduction of line and an emphasis on shape and color. In *Late Autumn*, the artist represents a woman repairing *shōji*, wood and white, translucent paper sliding doors. While committed to her traditionally based art, Shōen changed the temper and form of her work, achieving a remarkably modern quality imbued with the elegance of the past.



Receptivity and Response: Portraiture

Portraiture has always been an important Japanese subject, especially in Buddhist painting and sculpture from the eighth century onwards. In a marked departure from the formal poses of traditional portraiture, the personages depicted by *Nihonga* artists are candidly shown. Many times the paintings capture a moment of reflection in an activity and suggest not only the physical presence but the psychological state of the sitter.

(SDO)



85

Kitano Tsunetomi, 1880–1947

Lady Chacha, 1921
(Chacha-dono)

Framed: color on silk
178.8×84.6 cm.
Osaka Prefectural Nakanoshima Library

After Tsunetomi became a member of the Japan Art Institute (Nihon Bijutsu-in) in 1917, it was lamented that the "sensual charm and vigor" of his mildly erotic figures had disappeared. In their stead were stylish young women with bobbed hair, or staid but finely rendered historical figures such as *Lady Chacha*. Shown against somber, subdued colors is the tragic Chacha (1567–1615) who, after the destruction of her family by Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1536–1598), would become his consort known as Yodo-gimi (Lady of Yodo Castle). Tsunetomi not only portrays her youthful beauty and rich robes that display decorative techniques and gold-leaf imprints, but he also reveals the subtle tension rising from her uncertain fate as a concubine and the mother of Hideyoshi's only two sons.

86

Kaburaki Kiyokata, 1878–1972

Portrait of San'yūtei Enchō, 1930
(San'yūtei Enchō zō)

Framed: color on silk
138.5×76 cm.
The National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo

San'yūtei Enchō (born Izubuchi Jirokichi, 1839–1900) was one of the great master storytellers of the nineteenth-century stage. His medium was *rakugo*, a comedic monologue in which the raconteur, alone on a bare stage and seated on a square cushion, creates a fictional drama through facial expressions and narration. Enchō was noted for his funny but moving tales of human compassion drawn from everyday life. Kiyokata, who knew the actor well, painted this portrait thirty years after Enchō's death, but imbues his older friend with a dignity and a convincing air of the man, theater, and the moment before going on stage. Known for his paintings of *bijin* (beautiful women), this is said to be Kiyokata's first portrait.





87

Yasuda Yukihiko, 1884–1978

Portrait of Imamura Shikō, 1916
(Imamura Shikō zō)

Hanging scroll: ink and color on paper
105×91.5 cm.
Tokyo National Museum

When Imamura Shikō died in 1916, his close friend Yukihiko was asked to paint a likeness for Shikō's memorial exhibit. He found a small photograph from which to create this stylistically intriguing posthumous portrait. The rather casual, impromptu style of the work is unusual for the artist who for most of his career painted serious religious and historical themes, employing a style based on *Yamato-e* and Rinpa for his cool, dispassionate, heroic figures. In marked contrast to his sober, "neo-classicist" style, Yukihiko's portrait of Shikō is refreshingly direct and graced with an engaging, impressionistic flavor that betrays a remarkable degree of Western influence for this staunchly Japanese-style painter.

88

Tamaki Suekazu, 1897–1943

***Ukichi*, 1926**
(Ukichi)

Framed: color on silk
136×63 cm.
Kyoto Municipal Museum of Art

Ukichi depicts an assistant in a traditional dry-goods shop that sells fabric for kimonos, cushions, and quilts. Shown at the fifth exhibition of the Association for the Creation of National Painting (Kokuga Sōsaku Kyōkai), this unusual portrayal of a familiar, individualized worker reveals the close ties that existed between members of the Association and Kyoto's traditional textile industries. Tamaki Suekazu was a gifted, little known, and short-lived artist who employed Western elements of art such as boldly contrasting colors in purely formal terms, resisting the genre quality and literary overtones evident in contemporary representations of similar social types and settings.





89

Katayama Nanpū, 1887–1980

The Painter Yokoyama Taikan, 1957
(Yokoyama Taikan sensei)

Hanging scroll: color on paper
120.5×78.5 cm.
Yokoyama Taikan Memorial Hall, Tokyo

During his long lifetime, Yokoyama Taikan was one of the most influential artists in *Nihonga*. As a successful painter, respected jurist, and tireless teacher and organizer, Taikan wielded great power in the arts. On the recommendation of Taikan, Nanpū's painting in the seventh Bunten of 1913 won second prize, catapulting the unknown artist to fame. Nanpū then became a close follower of Taikan. This portrait was done the year before Taikan's death and depicts the master in traditional robes, with the ubiquitous cigarette between his fingers. A superb colorist, the artist captures Taikan's strong physical features as well as his strength of character in warm, mottled tones that stand out against the blank background and the blue outer garment.



90

Maeda Seison, 1885–1977

Portrait of Mr. Y., 1951
(Y-shi zō).

Framed: color on paper
82×89.5 cm.
The National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo

In this painting, Seison captures both the outer appearance and the inner character of Yasui Sōtarō (1888–1955), the noted oil painter. Seated at his easel with palette and brushes in hand, Yasui's austere personality is accentuated by the visual delectation of his indigo blue kimono set against a muted gold-wash background. The painting underscores the fact that the technical separation of traditional-style *Nihonga* and Western-style *yōga* did not preclude close associations and mutual friendships between artists working in the two different art forms.



91
Katayama Nanpū, 1887–1980
The Writer Mushanokōji Saneatsu, 1955
(Mushanokōji sensei)
Framed: color on paper
129.3×90 cm.
Kumamoto Prefectural Museum of Art

Nanpū is best known as a landscape painter, but he was also a gifted portraitist. The writer Mushanokōji Saneatsu played a major role in introducing modern Western art through the journal *Shirakaba* (White Birch). The painter and the writer came to know one another through their artistic activities. Nanpū attempted five paintings of Mushanokōji before he was satisfied with this version. The creative and scholarly character of Mushanokōji is represented by the brush he holds. Nanpū further reinforces the man's intellectual character in his steady gaze.



92

Maeda Seison, 1885–1977

White Hair, 1961
(Hakutō)

Framed: ink and light color on paper
128×156.6 cm.
Art Museum, Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music

In celebration of his 77th birthday, an occasion which according to Asian reckoning is especially felicitous because of the double numerals of seven, Seison painted this self-portrait. While looking closely at himself in the mirror, he mused how old he had become without even knowing it and named the painting *White Hair*. Spare in tone and technique, the painting is a remarkable likeness delineated in a fluid linear manner that conveys both the artist's physical appearance and spiritual being.



93

Ogura Yuki, b.1895

Seated Portrait of Mrs. O., 1953
(O-fujin zazō)

Framed: color on paper
129×104 cm.
The National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo

In *Mrs. O.*, Yuki depicts a seemingly plain but proper young woman at a slight tilt, her rumpled kimono a pale blue with aniline purple highlights set against a green patterned cushion. Using compositional angles and a flattening distortion of forms, the artist conjures up a mildly anxious mood and a scene of domesticity in which things are slightly askew. Well known as a painter of women, Yuki's work and its ambiguous emotional tone are decidedly modern in character and supersede the traditional genre of *bijin-ga*. More than any other artist of her generation, Yuki incorporated into postwar *Nihonga* innovative pictorial techniques and perspectives of Western modern painting that had once inspired prewar *yōga* artists.

Receptivity and Response: Birds and Flowers, Fish and Animals

Bird-and-flower painting (*kachō-ga*) is a traditional genre in China and Japan with deep associations with the literature and history of both cultures. The depiction of large animals, such as dragons, elephants, and tigers, originated in Buddhist painting; smaller creatures were associated with the genre of bird-and-flower painting. *Nihonga* artists have employed a variety of traditional styles in creating their own innovative works. With the introduction of modern circuses, menageries, and zoos, as well as the growth of photography and illustrated botanical books, the artist's sources were greatly expanded. Reliance on traditional painting manuals and copybooks was largely diminished in favor of *shasei*, or sketching from life. Indeed, many artists became well known for their fascination with and close study of these subjects.

(SDO)



94

Takeuchi Seihō, 1864–1942

***Moor Hens Among the Iris*, 1914**
(Kakitsubata ni ban zu)

Two sliding cedar doors: color on wood
144×50 cm. each
The Imperial Household Agency

By 1913, Seihō had achieved wide recognition as one of the finest artists of his generation, and was named an Imperial Household Artist. He was also honored by being included in a group of *Nihonga* painters who were commissioned to create sliding doors for the Aoyama Detached Palace, the permanent residence built for the Dowager Empress Shōken (1850–1914), widow of the Meiji Emperor (1852–1912). *Moor Hens Among the Iris* is painted on Japanese cedar, a resinous wood that requires preparation and priming prior to painting. The technical limits imposed by the wood may have prompted Seihō to create a design less dependent on his famously fluid brush than on the sumptuous but more controlled decorative Rinpa style.

95

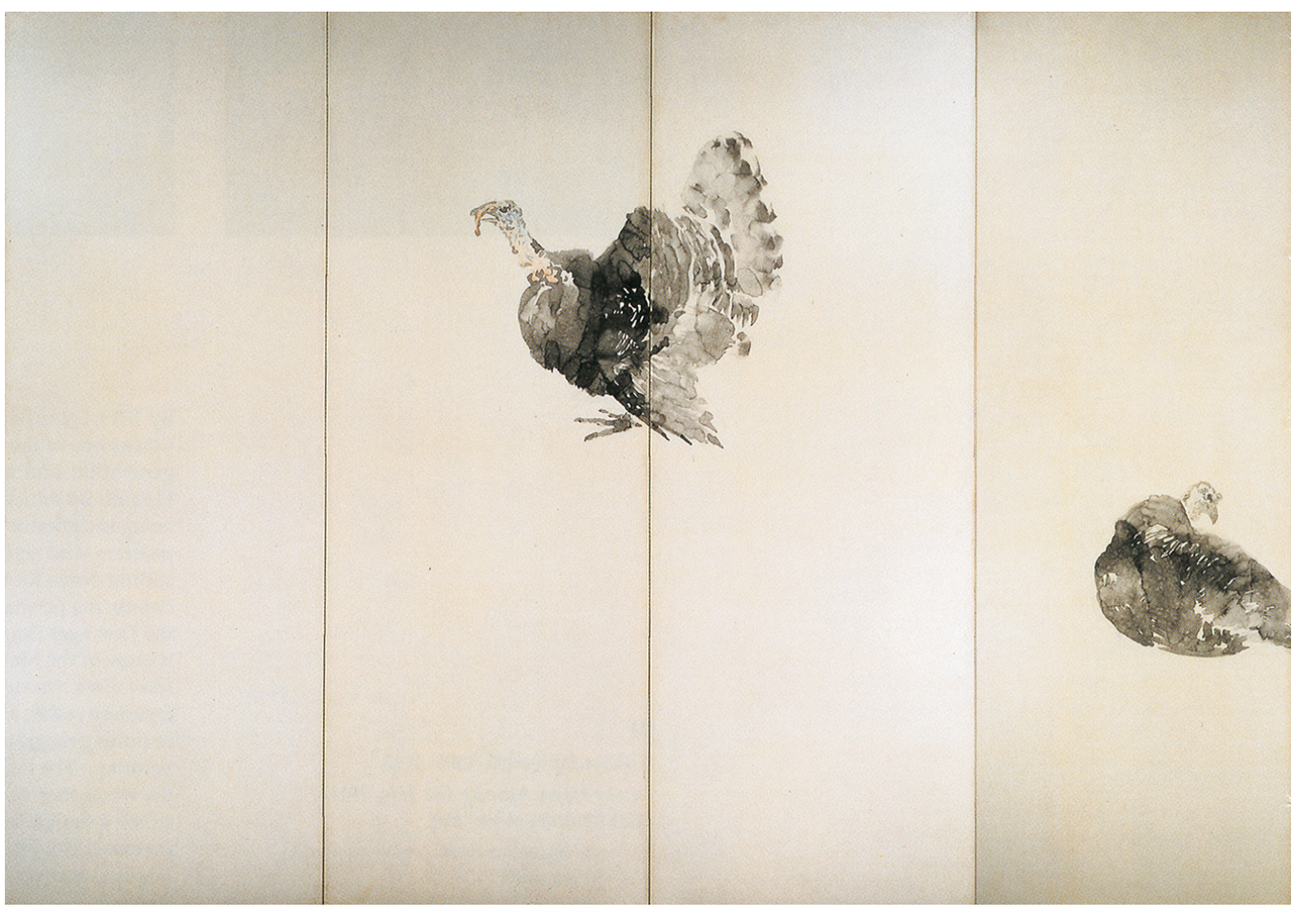
Hirafuku Hyakusui, 1877–1933

Turkeys, 1914
(Shichimenchō)

Pair of six-panel screens: ink and light color on paper
166×357 cm. each
Private collection

Late in 1913, Hyakusui acquired domesticated turkeys to use as models for his bird-and-flower paintings. Imported from the West during the Meiji period, the turkey was an exotic fowl to the Japanese who called it *shichimenchō* or "seven-faced bird." Hyakusui introduced this startlingly new motif into Japanese bird-and-flower painting, a repertoire which had changed little over the centuries. Moreover, instead of using the traditional technique, Hyakusui employed a unique method of applying stains of dark ink within the still-wet pools of lighter ink on unsized paper to express the plump, feathery softness of the birds' bodies and motions. His audacious use of novel subject matter and unusual technique earned Hyakusui a third prize at the eighth Bunten.











96

Takeuchi Seihō, 1864–1942

Cockfight, 1926
(Keai)

Framed: color on silk
123×141.5 cm.
Private collection

Noted for his remarkable ability to render vivid images of animals, Seihō here captures the ferocity of fighting cocks in this extraordinary display of frenzied movement. The birds' muscular intensity as well as their iridescent plumage and bright combs are faithfully conveyed in this stop-action image of striking wings and deadly spurs. The depiction of violent motion was quite a novelty in modern art at the time, and especially so for *Nihonga*. Popular for centuries, cockfighting was officially banned in 1873 but continued in rural areas where Seihō may have had occasion to observe the exciting but illicit practice.



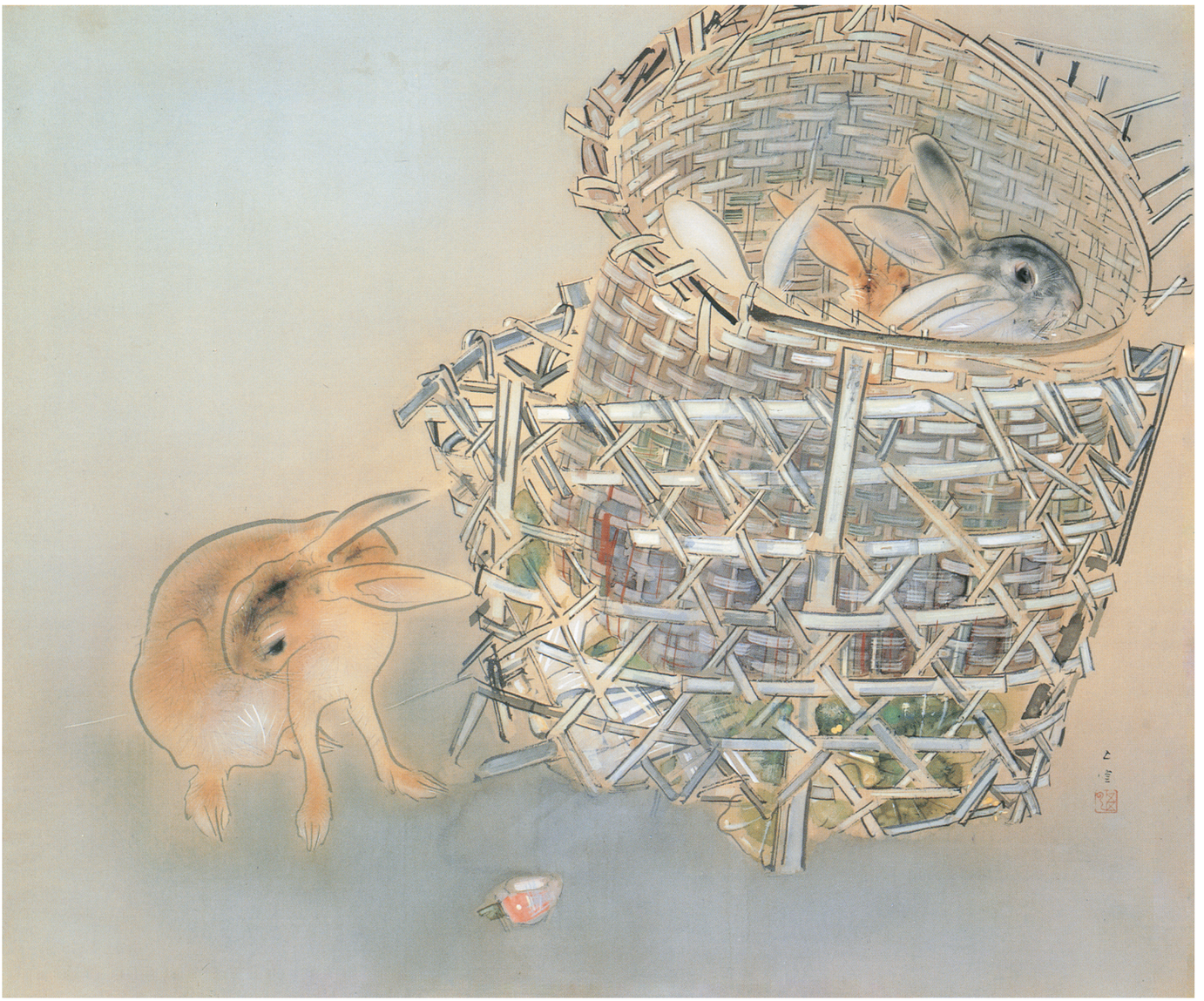
97

Takeuchi Seihō, 1864–1942

Fish and Vegetables, 1930
(Gyosai zu)

Framed: color on silk
66.8×71.9 cm.
Staatliche Museen zu Berlin-Preussischer Kulturbesitz Museum für Ostasiatische Kunst, Inv.Nr.5839

From 1925, Seihō often visited the resort of Numazu, staying at a friend's seaside villa. During this period, the artist created many still-lifes incorporating the fresh seafood and local produce of the area. He was particularly adept at realistic portrayals of aquatic creatures because his father had run a fish restaurant. Seihō's later works such as *Fish and Vegetables* tended to emphasize compositional complexity, tonal contrasts, and subtle color. This work was shown at a Japanese painting exhibition in Berlin in 1931. After the exhibition travelled to Düsseldorf and Budapest, Seihō presented it to the German government.



98

Nishimura Goun, 1877–1938

Garden Improvisation, 1938
(Enri sokkyō)

Framed: color on silk
98.5×118 cm.
Kyoto Municipal Museum of Art

Goun studied with Kishi Chikudō and Takeuchi Seihō, both of whom were accomplished animal painters. Seihō especially was known for his pictures of rabbits. Chikudō taught the importance of accurate sketching, a lesson that Goun practiced throughout his career. At the end of his life, Goun continued to make sketch drafts that he used as the basis for paintings like this one. Here a bunch of rabbits sit in a stack of vegetable baskets. Goun captures the wide-eyed, alert character of the rabbit in the basket and contrasts it with the nonchalant grooming of another. His animals have a winsome quality that is particularly appealing.



99

Hashimoto Kansetsu, 1883–1945

Monkey, c.1940
(Saru)

Hanging scroll: ink and color on silk
51.2×57.1 cm.
Adachi Museum of Art, Yasugi

Monkeys and fruit are ancient Chinese painting subjects that became identified with the Maruyama-Shijō school of painting through the vivid renderings of monkeys by Mori Sosen (1748–1821) and Tetsuzan (1765–1841). Renowned for his modern blending of literati and Maruyama-Shijō school realism, Kansetsu gives *Monkey* a distinctly Japanese identity by depicting the macaque (*Macaca fuscata*), a medium-sized monkey of burnt-umber coloring found on the islands of Honshū, Shikoku, and Kyūshū. The artist also imbues the painting with a seasonal character as the monkey eyes a persimmon. Kansetsu's paintings of this type were especially prized by private collectors for their homes and offices.



100

Takeuchi Seihō, 1864–1942

Frogs and Dragonfly, 1934
(Kaeru to tonbo)

Hanging scroll: color on paper
94×111 cm.
Yamatane Museum of Art, Tokyo

Seihō exhibited this work at the fifteenth Teiten exhibition after he had abstained for four years from this particular competition. Known for his methodical and intense scrutiny of animal subjects, for this painting Seihō studied the habits and movements of frogs so acutely that it is said that he was able to distinguish male from female. In contrast to his earlier naturalistic work, later animal paintings like *Frogs and Dragonfly*, while accurately depicting the form and character of his subjects, concentrated on the humorous and lively. Seihō did not make clear what he intended, but it was widely construed that he represented himself in this image as the light, jewel-like dragonfly wafting high above the guttural croaking of his critics.



101

Takeuchi Seihō, 1864–1942

***Spring Snow*, 1942**
(Shunsetsu)

Framed: ink and color on silk
74.3×90.9 cm.
Private collection

Spring Snow was painted in the last year of the artist's life. Solitary and forlorn, the rumpled black form of a sharp-beaked crow perches on the naked bow of a wooden boat amidst a snow flurry. Many artists are noted for their works exploring the aesthetic notion of *mono no aware*, that gentle melancholy and sadness drawn from the knowledge that all is impermanent. Awakened to life's evanescence, a person's acceptance of ephemerality is a source of elegant beauty, as is the expression of that particular feeling to another capable of appreciating it. Seihō expresses the idea here as deeply as any.



102

Takeuchi Seihō, 1864–1942

Lacquered Fan, 1928
(Shibu-uchiwa)

Hanging scroll: color on silk
45.1×51.5 cm.
Adachi Museum of Art, Yasugi

The seasonal motifs of fan and cricket are evocative of warm autumn evenings ushered in on the rising sound of insects. The richly variegated form of the lacquer-hardened paper and bamboo fan looms large and heavy over the wispy-legged, delicate cricket, the contrast made mildly amusing by their overwhelmingly disproportionate sizes. In a nearly effortless way, Seihō combines the very simplest and most ordinary of objects, whether feather-fan and charcoal, burdock and bugs, ice and sweet fish, or this lacquer fan and cricket, to summon up lyrically poignant relationships and trigger a range of feelings in his viewers.

103

Sakakibara Shihō, 1887–1971

Setting Sun, c.1913
(Sekiyō)

Hanging scroll: color on silk
138.2×55.8 cm.
Adachi Museum of Art, Yasugi

Shihō was one of the founding members of the Association for the Creation of National Painting (Kokuga Sōsaku Kyōkai), which broke from the government-run Bunten to form its own exhibition organization in Kyoto in 1918. Along with his colleagues, Tsuchida Bakusen and Murakami Kagaku, Shihō was interested in a heightened realism which was to be expressed in new artistic subjects and themes as well as innovative techniques. In this work, Shihō paints *hima* (*tōgoma*), an ornamental plant with distinctive toothy leaves of reddish purple. He has flattened the naturally curly leaves for a stunningly decorative effect and illuminated them from behind with the rays of the setting sun to achieve a full treatment of detail, texture, and color.





104
Hayami Gyoshū, 1894–1935
Autumn Eggplants and Black Teabowl,
1921
(Akinasu to kurochawan)
Framed: color on silk
28×25 cm.
The National Museum of Modern Art, Kyoto



105

Hayami Gyoshū, 1894–1935

Teacup and Fruit, 1921
(Chawan to kajitsu)

Hanging scroll: color on gold-leafed silk
26.9×23.8 cm.
The National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo

Between 1921 and 1924, Gyoshū concentrated on minutely realistic still-lifes, using a size and composition reminiscent of Chinese album paintings of the Song and Yuan dynasties. As in its continental models, objects such as fruit, vegetables, and ceramic wares, carefully chosen for their delicate quality, are painstakingly composed to create an intimacy perfectly suited to their dimensions. The artist furthers the pictorial associations to ancient album painting by inscribing the date in an elegant hand. These works at once reveal Gyoshū's consummate skill in rendering the materiality of his subjects and disprove the notion that traditional materials and methods are incompatible with lifelike representation.

In *Autumn Eggplants and Black Bowl,* Gyoshū paints emblems of cool fall weather, the deep, thick-walled *raku* bowl and small eggplants. Although the ceramic piece and vegetables are similar in hue, the artist masterfully expresses the subtleties of their individual qualities, contrasting the glazed and weighty stoneware bowl with the firm, dark-purple skin of the eggplants. *Teacup and Fruit* is a study in contrasts between these symbols of summer: the soft flesh of the red ripened plums and the cool, reflective surface of the blue and white ceramic.



106

106

Tsuchida Bakusen, 1887–1936

Poppies, c.1925
(Bijinsō)

Hanging scroll: color on paper
31.8×46.5 cm.
Collection of Ono Jōshō

107

Tsuchida Bakusen, 1887–1936

Poppies, 1926
(Keshi)

Hanging scroll: color on silk
196.5×105 cm.
The Niigata Prefectural Museum of Modern Art

From around 1925, Bakusen became fascinated by poppies, frequently sketching them in notebooks during his trips. He collected seeds of the flower from all over the country and cultivated in his garden varieties of poppies for study. The expressive range of Bakusen's floral works could vary remarkably. In the smaller, more intimate work (Plate 106), Bakusen captures the sprightly charm of field poppies called *binjinsō*, named after a court beauty of ancient China, Yu Meiren, upon whose grave these fragile flowers bloomed. The artist imparts to the flowers a limpid sensuality of line and color, almost musical in its lively expression and delicate notation. In the larger piece, presented at the fifth exhibition of the Association for the Creation of National Painting (Kokuga Sōsaku Kyōkai), the stately but exotic character of the flower strongly ties it to the Rinpa tradition. Here the summer blossoms of an opium poppy are presented morning-fresh, yet curiously still and expectant.



107



108

108

Tokuoka Shinsen, 1896–1972

Lotus, c.1922
(Hasu)

Framed: color on silk
62×85 cm.
The National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo

The use of neo-realism of this work reveals the range of expression created by the artist and his brilliant adaptation of traditional media. The term for modern, scientific realism, *shajitsu-shugi*, was not used before the Meiji period. The earlier naturalism of the Maruyama-Shijō school drew upon life to reproduce all the salient features of a subject and inform the viewer. The realism of *shajitsu-shugi* sought to reproduce things precisely and objectively. Here the artist captures the velvety textures of the broad-leafed lotus and the jewel-like, crystalline character of dew on the plant.

109

Fukuda Heihachirō, 1892–1974

Irises, 1934
(Hanashōbu zu)

Framed: color on silk
145×82.8 cm.
The National Museum of Modern Art, Kyoto

The iris of early summer recalls the tenth-century classic, *Tales of Ise* (Ise monogatari), which contains the celebrated *yatsuhashi* or "Eight Bridges" poem. This thirty-one-syllable *waka* was written when a young nobleman, admiring the irises that border a stream crossed by eight bridges, stopped to compose a poem to his lover in the distant capital. The brilliant Rinpa artist Ogata Kōrin (1658–1716) used the subject so effectively that flower, theme, and painting style became intimately connected with one another. In *Irises* the intricacies of flower and plant are distilled and reduced to pattern and near abstraction. And while capitalizing on the earlier associations of the traditional theme, Heihachirō nonetheless coolly and objectively defines his horticultural subject.



109



110

Kawabata Ryūshi, 1885–1966

Gentle Warmth, 1932
(Wadan)

Pair of two-panel screens: gold on dark blue silk
167.3×167 cm. each
The Miyagi Museum of Art

In China and Japan, the technique of painting in gold and silver on indigo blue had long been used on handscrolls and richly painted book covers as well as black lacquer grounds. To create an innovative painting entitled *Flaming Grasses* (Sōen) in 1930, Ryūshi employed the elaborately decorative technique on a pair of six-panel screens on a far larger format and scale than had ever been seen before. The effect was stunning. Two years later, he painted *Gentle Warmth*, a bird-and-flower painting that, in contrast to the common ground weeds depicted in the earlier work, shows graceful, blooming bushes glowing in reddish gold against a rich indigo-colored silk.



Receptivity and Response: Landscape

The landscape or *sansui* (literally "mountains and water") has been a primary category of brush painting in East Asia for over a millennium. *Nihonga* artists have continued the painting of mountains, water, and trees, imbuing the various traditions and styles with fresh and modern perspectives, even at times reducing a motif or subject to abstract patterns. *Nihonga* landscape paintings are notable for their expansion of subject matter, including foreign scenery, and the frequent blending of traditional styles as well as the use of Western techniques.

(SDO)



111



112

111

Ono Chikkyō, 1889–1979

Southern Country, 1911
(Nangoku)

Hanging scroll: color on paper
68.3×68.3 cm.
University Art Museum of
Kyoto City University of Arts

In his twenties, Chikkyō was active in a number of study groups in Kyoto, including Le Chat Noir and Le Masque, both of which were founded by painters of *Nihonga* and *yōga*. Introduced at the first exhibition of Le Masque, this painting reveals not only the influence of the Kyoto school and Chikkyō's teacher Takeuchi Seihō, but also the impact of Post-Impressionist painting in its saturated mineral colors and technique. Chikkyō's particular interest in the vivid hues and concrete forms of Cézanne seems to have been filtered through the work of such *yōga* artists as Fujishima Takeji (1867–1943).

112

Takeuchi Seihō, 1864–1942

Rain, 1911
(Ame)

Hanging scroll: ink on silk
118×152 cm.
Kyoto Municipal Museum of Art

Seihō was distinguished for his mastery of the ink landscape. Ink painting has had a long history in both China and Japan. Technically demanding and unembellished by color, it is revered for its purity of conception and execution, revealing through the brush alone the artistic character and cultural sophistication of the painter. Seihō possessed a facile and fluid brush over which he had consummate control, coupled with an acute tonal sense. His skills were no better revealed than in paintings such as *Rain*, in which richly dark, burnt ink, either saturated or in gradated washes, creates evocative, haunting landscapes of humidity and mist.



Winter



Autumn

113

Yamamoto Shunkyo, 1871–1933

Four Seasons, 1913
(Shunka shūtō)

Set of four hanging scrolls: color on silk
171.5×86.4 cm. each
The National Museum of Modern Art, Kyoto

Shunkyo was a frequent exhibitor at the annual Bunten exhibitions organized by the Ministry of Education; in the second (1908) and third (1909) exhibitions the government purchased both his entries. Stylistically, Shunkyo had achieved an innovative synthesis of traditional Maruyama-Shijō naturalism and the realism of modern photography that appealed to the inherently conservative tastes of the late Meiji era. At the seventh Bunten of 1913, however, Shunkyo presented *Four Seasons*, a set of paintings subtitled *Light Mist [Spring], Bright Sky [Summer], Fresh Air [Autumn],* and *Frozen Wind* [*Winter*], in which he turned to a more lyrical expression of landscape themes. These works are less dependent on line and strong contrasts than on the lighter texture and clearer colors that are the hallmarks of early Taishō painting and characterized Shunkyo's subsequent work.



Summer



Spring



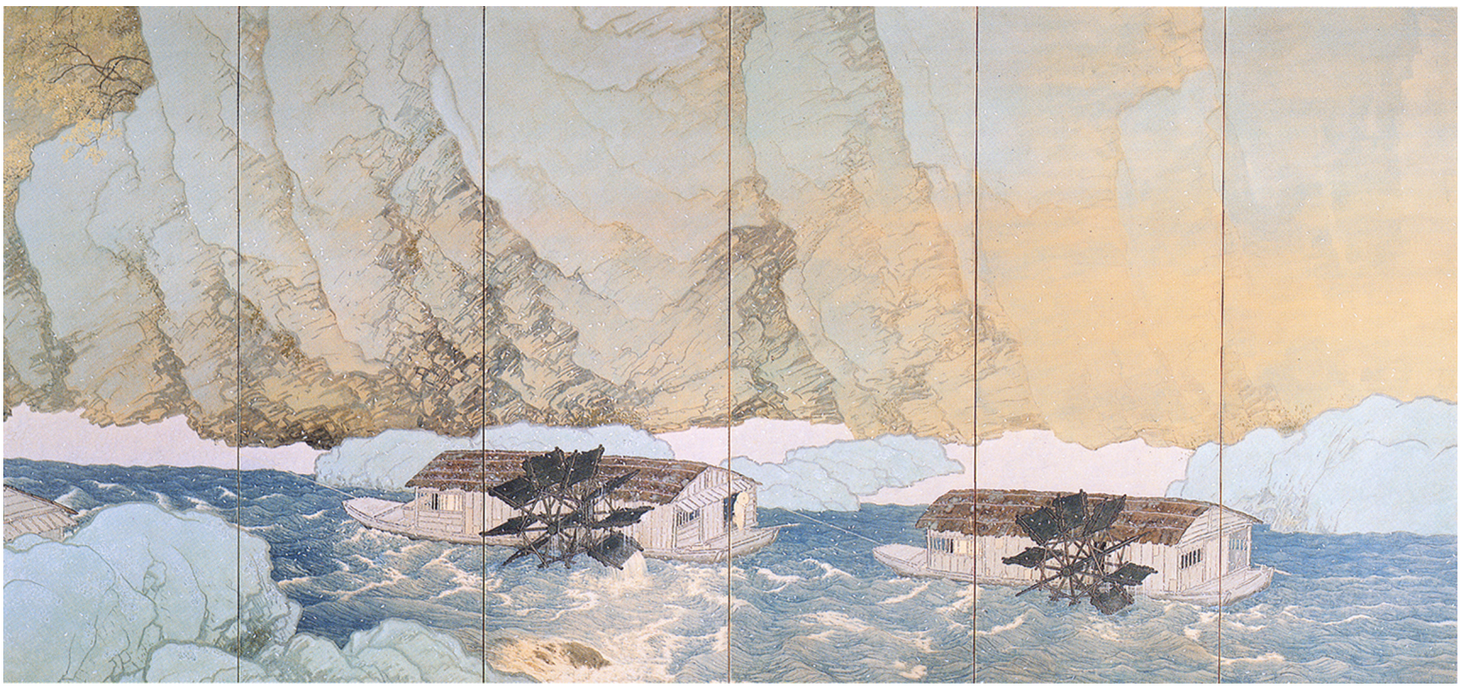
114

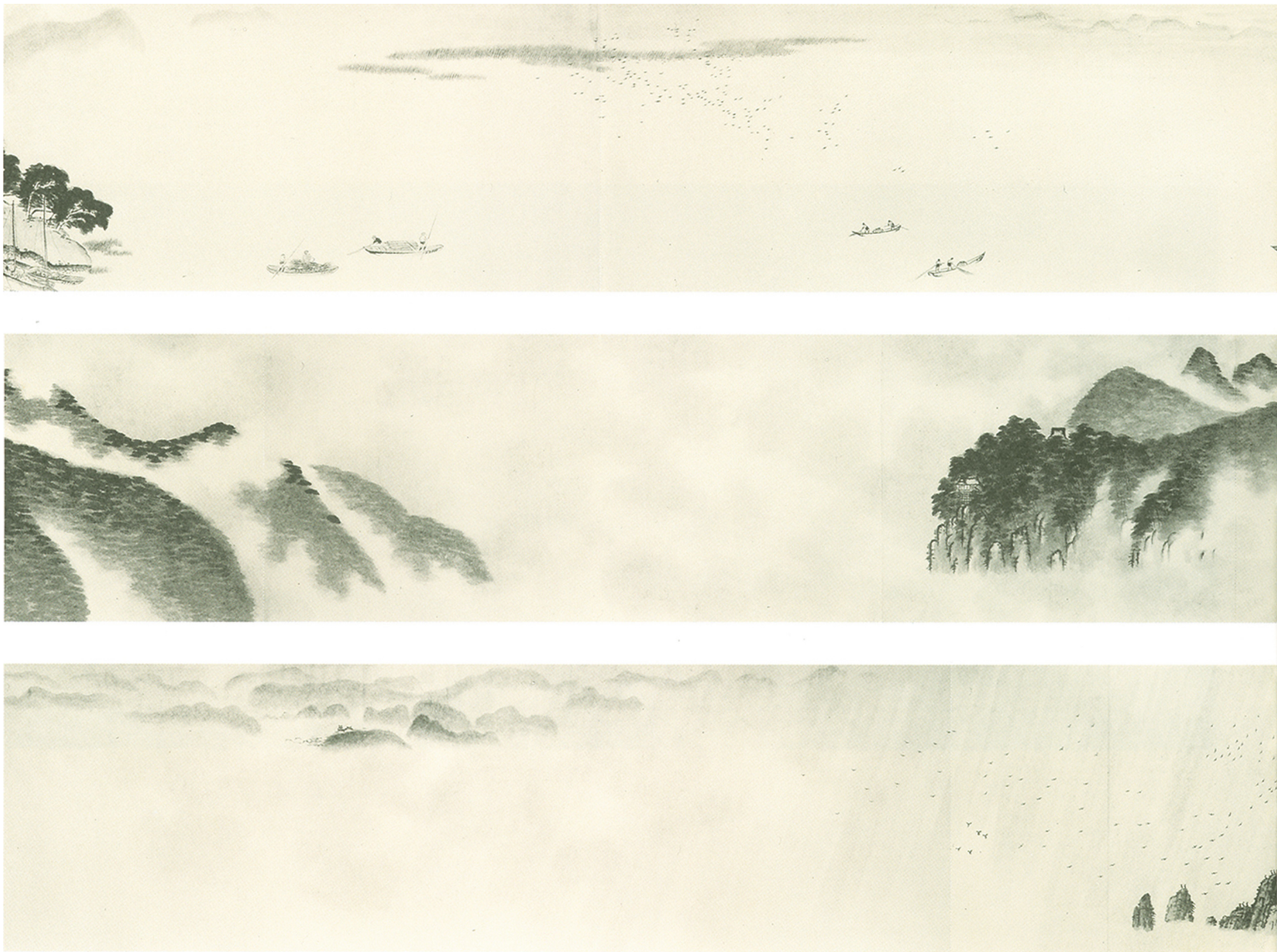
Kawai Gyokudō, 1873–1957

Waning Spring, 1916
(Yuku haru)

Pair of six-panel screens: color on paper
184×394 cm. each
The National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo
Important Cultural Property

Waning Spring was inspired by a trip into the mountains to view cherry blossoms. Taking a cruise through the Nagatorokyō Gorge along the Arakawa River, Gyokudō travelled through a region noted for its striking granite cliffs, deep primeval forests, and flowering cherries in springtime. In a departure from his usual oeuvre, the artist integrates diverse elements of the Maruyama-Shijō, Kanō, Rinpa, and literati traditions with Western pictorial style and watercolor techniques. The work is distinctive for its rich, shining palette and striking spatial compression. While pursuing the traditional themes of pictures of scenic places and the ephemeral beauty of cherry blossoms, Gyokudō revitalizes them with his stunningly innovative approach and presentation.





115

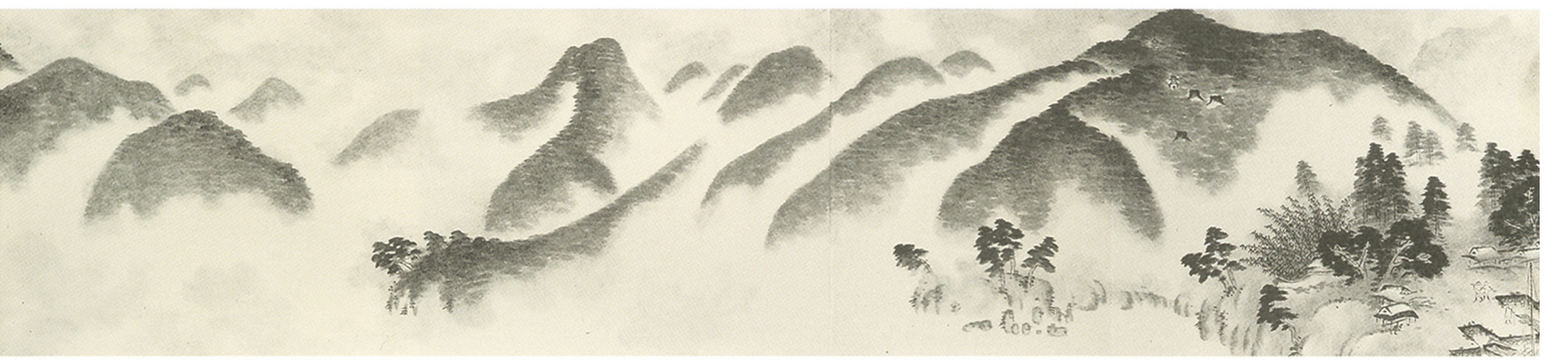
Yokoyama Taikan, 1868–1958

***Handscroll of Nio-no-ura*, 1918**
(Nio-no-ura emaki)

Handscroll: ink on paper
32.8×1030 cm.
The Museum of Modern Art, Shiga

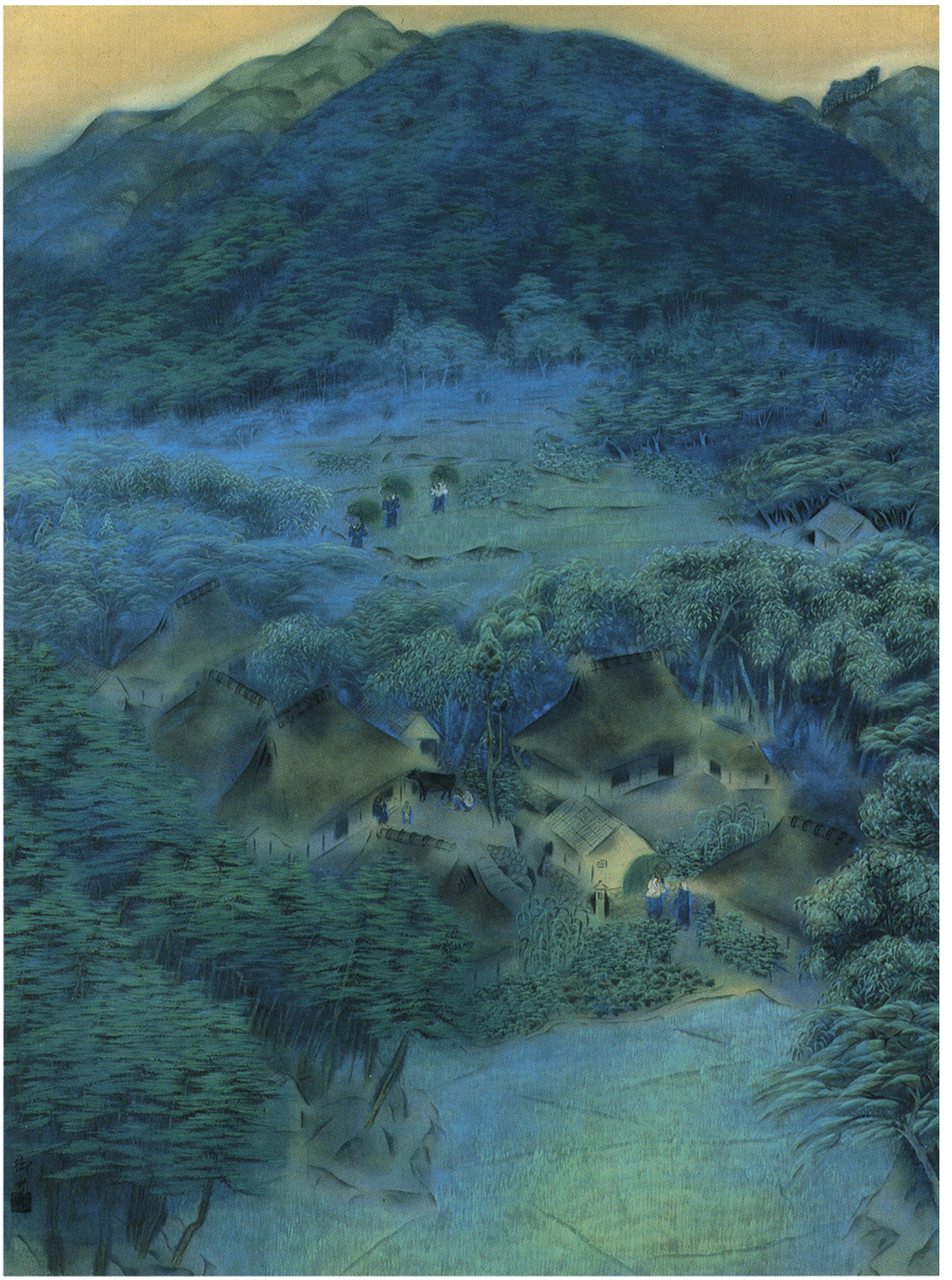
The *Eight Views of Ōmi* is a famous literary and painting theme used by Japanese artists since the sixteenth century. Depicting only six views of Ōmi, Taikan chose the title *Nio-no-ura*, the ancient name for Lake Biwa, to further distinguish his painting from all others on the theme. This separate identity is strengthened by the Chinese structure of the landscape, the use of ink alone, and the layering of oblong dots in the style of the Song dynasty painter Mi Fu (1051–1107). Taikan's particular version of the traditional Mi-dots (*Bei-ten*) here is a distinctive variation of the technique he developed in several large screen ink landscapes during this period.











116

Hayami Gyoshū, 1894–1935

Shūgakuin Village in North Kyoto, 1918
(Rakuhoku Shūgakuin-mura)

Framed: color on silk
132×97.5 cm.
The Museum of Modern Art, Shiga

The intense ambiance of twilight in Gyoshū's painting is created by the rich blue-green mineral pigment, ground from semi-precious stones, that forms the dominant color in the painting. His lavish use of expensive colors and materials is as impressive a feature as the inspiration and creation of the work. Here, Gyoshū has pictured the village to which he moved in 1918 near the famous Shūgakuin Detached Palace. Begun by the Emperor Go-Mizunoo (1596–1680) as an imperial family retreat, the palace grounds were originally planned as gardens ascending a hillside, separated and surrounded by rice fields. While the humble village is certainly the subject of the painting, it is by media and association that the historical character of the work is revealed.



117



118

117

Tsuji Kakō, 1870–1931

White Clouds and Red Leaves, c.1920
(Hakuun kōju)

Hanging scroll: color on silk
134.9×49.9 cm.
Collection of Uchiyama Takeo

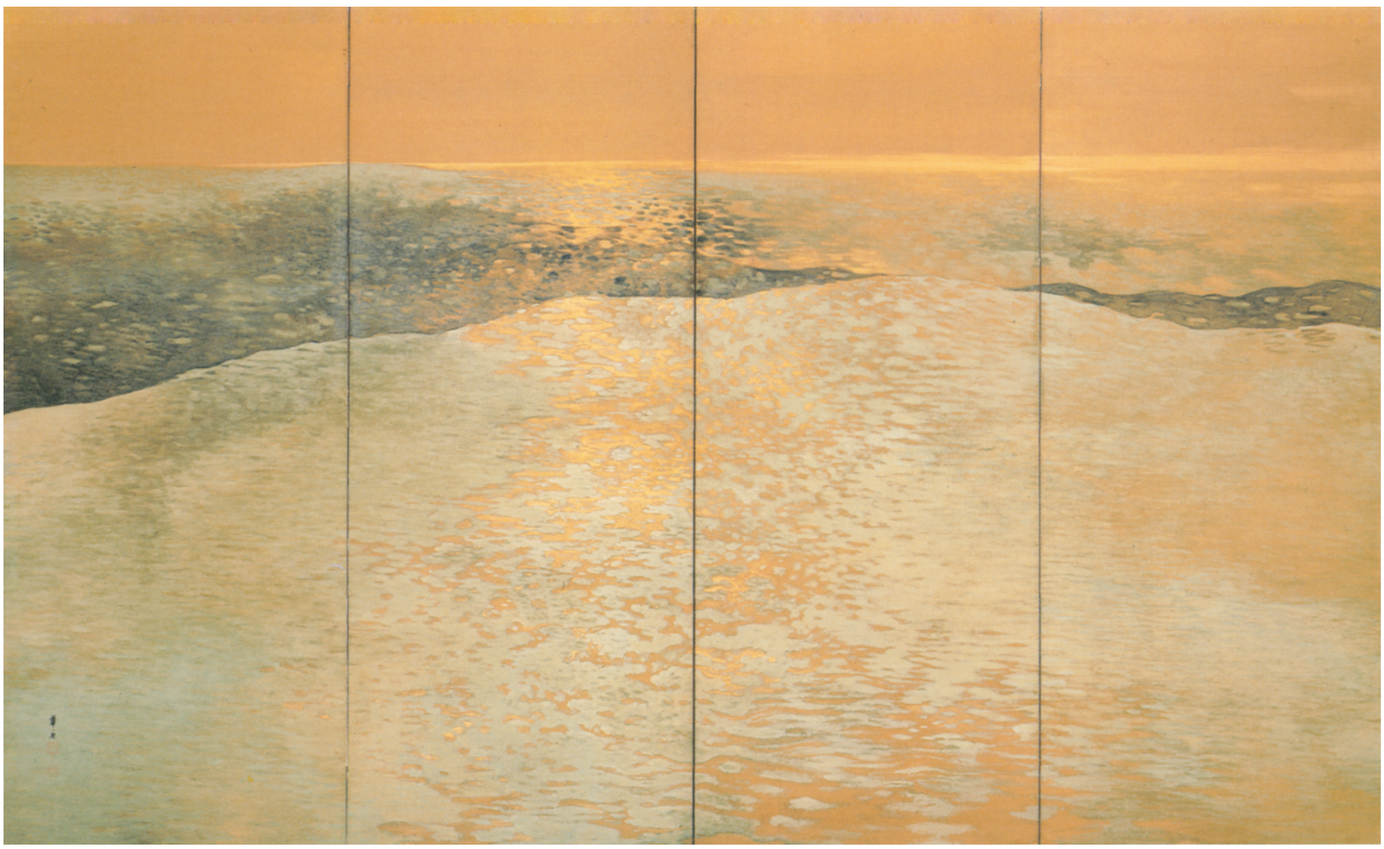
118

Tsuji Kakō, 1870–1931

Calm Waves, c.1920
(Seiha no zu)

Hanging scroll: color on silk
139.4×50.7 cm.
Private collection

In *White Clouds and Red Leaves*, Kakō paints birds in flight and autumn foliage. Illuminated from behind, the leaves turn from gold to crimson, suddenly darkening to purple in the shadow of a passing cloud. *Calm Waves* assumes the quality of a European watercolor in the way Kakō begins to blur the representation of motifs and pushes them into purely abstract patterns.



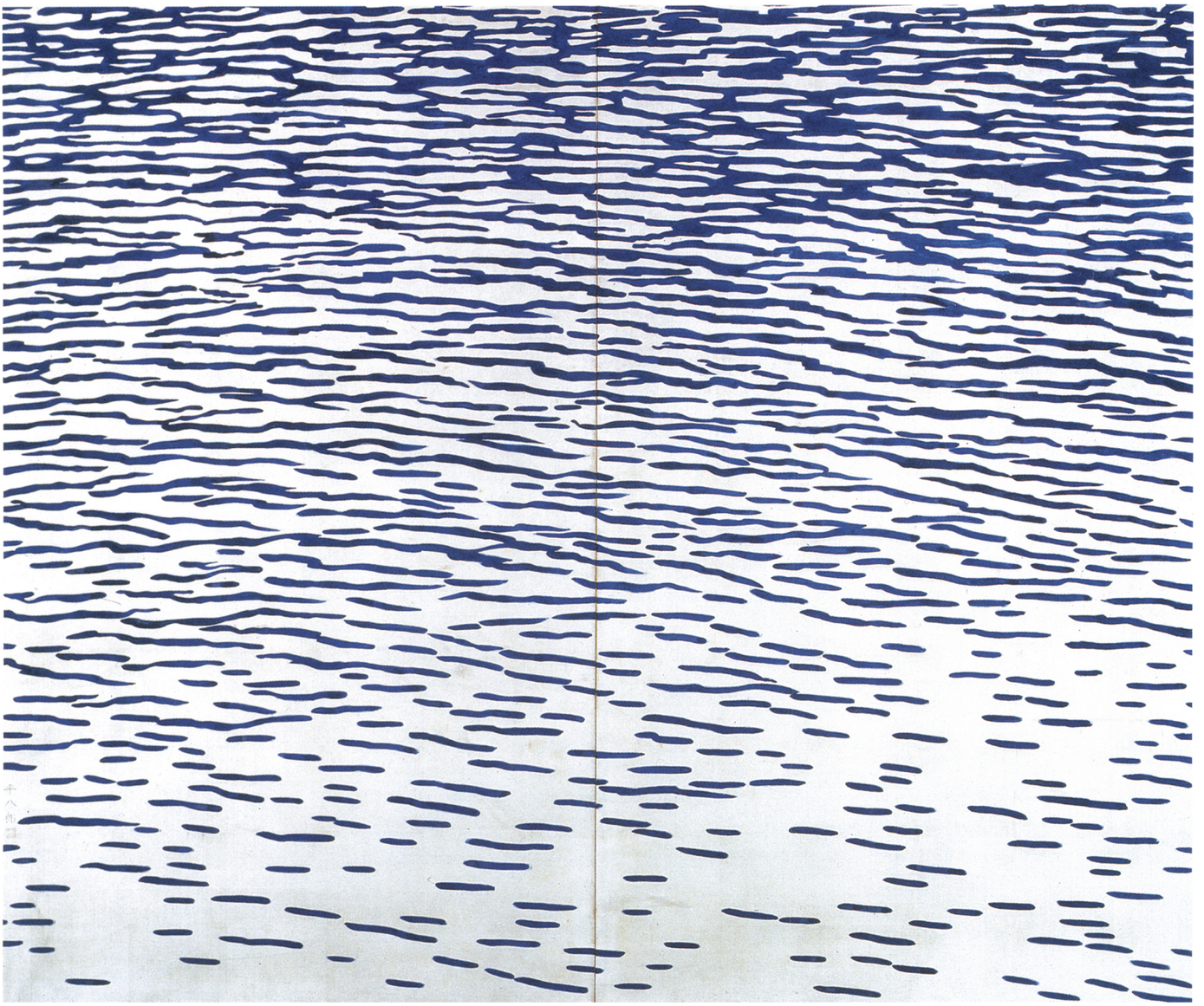
119

Tsuji Kakō, 1870–1931

Waves (Green), late 1900s–early 1910s
(Nami)

Four-panel screen: color and gold on silk
169.5×276 cm.
Collection of Griffith and Patricia Way, Seattle

Kakō was the first among the modern artists to investigate the abstract pictorial character of water through his many seascapes. He treated waves as repeated shapes and forms in a highly stylized manner that greatly appealed to the decorative tastes of the Taishō period. Sumptuously rendered in gold and malachite green, *Waves (Green)* reveals the highly decorative influence of Rinpa painting. The glistening reflections of light across the surface of moving water make a composition devoid of other motifs or visual references, leaving the viewer to linger on the rhythmic movement of form and brushstrokes.



120

Fukuda Heihachirō, 1892–1974

Ripples, 1932
(Sazanami)

Two-panel screen: color on silk
157×184.8 cm.
Osaka City Museum of Modern Art

When Heihachirō exhibited at the thirteenth Teiten, he had already gained considerable recognition. *Ripples*, however, was a radical and surprising departure from his earlier Teiten work on birds and flowers. The disintegrated network of wavering ultramarine blue lines on a silver ground records Heihachirō's experience of the sharply fragmented, fleeting effect of light glittering on the undulating, shadowy surface of a lake. The artist's highly focused, magnified, and selective view of nature not only appealed to traditional aesthetics and decorative art, but also satisfied Heihachirō's penchant for the detailed recording of natural phenomena. Critically acclaimed in 1932, *Ripples* continues to be admired for both its fidelity of representation and its unquestionably abstract character.



121

Dōmoto Inshō, 1891–1975

Hill, 1924

(Saka)

Framed: color on silk
120×90 cm.
Kyoto Prefectural Inshō-Dōmoto Museum of Fine Arts

In this evocative work, Inshō depicts a neighborhood in Kyoto as he saw it during the later years of the Taishō era, when present and past sat poised opposite one another but inextricably linked. People strolling in both traditional and Western dress walk along a broad, sloping road lined with telephone and electric poles, whose wires connect the Western houses as well as the old temple hall to parts beyond. This was a time when the social and cultural reforms of the Meiji had been realized and where modern life rested comfortably with traditional ways.



122

Ikeda Yōson, 1895–1988

***Osaka in Snow*, 1928**
(Yuki no Osaka)

Two-panel screen: color on silk
169×236 cm.
Meguro Gajoen Museum of Art, Tokyo

In *Osaka in Snow*, Yōson has captured the light-filled but muted character of the urban landscape under the muffle of newly fallen snow. Set off by the dark, contrasting waters of Osaka's Dōjima River and Tosabori Canal, the picture is a precise, tonal study of exceptional sensitivity in which Yōson uses chalk white to express the subtleties of shade and relief. The artist, who began his career as a *yōga* painter in Osaka, presents a view from Nakanoshima, an island in the heart of the city. Looking eastward from Nakanoshima Park and beyond the iron structure of Tenjin Bridge, Yōson fills the horizon with the gabled ramparts of Osaka Castle.



123

Murakami Kagaku, 1888–1939

Pine Trees on a Rocky Mountain, 1939
(Ganzan shōju no zu)

Hanging scroll: ink and color on paper
56.7×39.6 cm.
Private collection

From about 1925 onwards, Kagaku began to render his landscapes with an emphasis on monochromatic color and brushwork. Writhing mountains fill his pictures, their intertwined serpentine forms nearly indistinguishable from the tangle of trees and foliage that intrude in their lower portions. Kagaku links his expression as much to subdued color as to line. In this instance, indigo blue and purple are blended with ink on a fine wet-washed paper that further softens his brushwork. This painting is one of the last landscapes painted by Kagaku, whose late meditative works are noted for their unworldly character.

124a

Kawabata Ryūshi, 1885–1966

Shikoku Pilgrimage: Twenty-Eighth Stop, Dainichiji Temple on Mount Hōkai, 1951
(Shikoku henro dai-nijūhachi-ban fudasho Hōkaizan Dainichiji)

Album leaf from a set of eighty-eight (framed): ink and light color on paper
28.6×23.6 cm.
Private collection

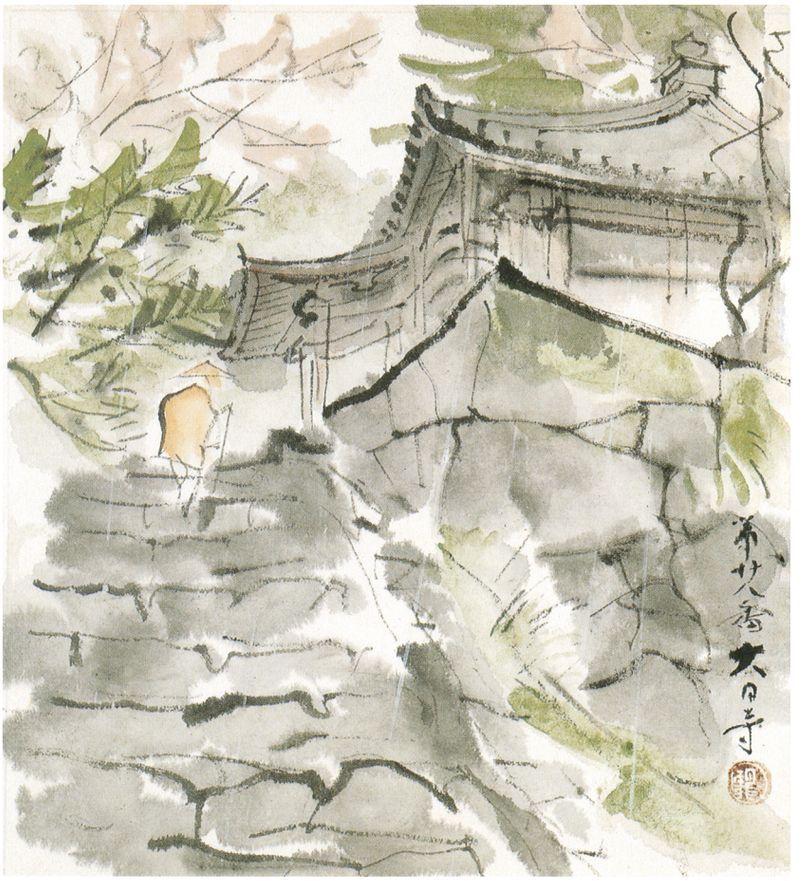
124b

Kawabata Ryūshi, 1885–1966

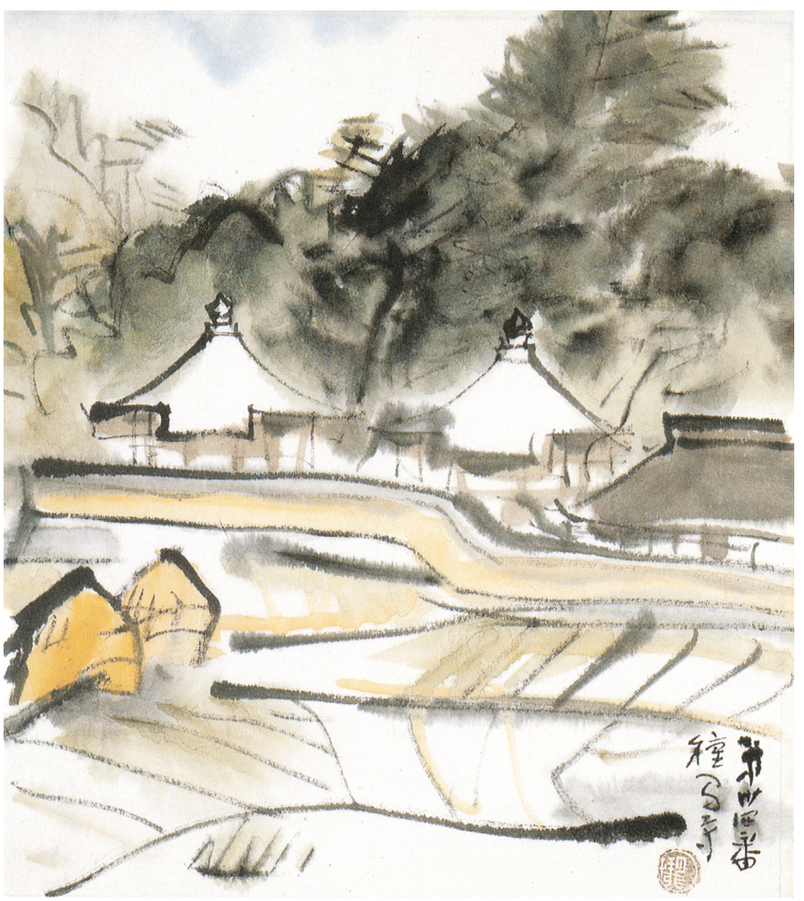
Shikoku Pilgrimage: Thirty-Fourth Stop, Tanemaji Temple on Mount Motoo, 1951
(Shikoku henro dai-sanjūyon-ban fudasho Motoozan Tanemaji)

Album leaf from a set of eighty-eight (framed): ink and light color on paper
29×23.9 cm.
Private collection

Ryūshi's fondness for retracing historical routes and itineraries had a stimulating influence on his art. On yearly trips from 1950 through 1957, the artist went on pilgrimages to the Eighty-Eight Sacred Places and followed the prescribed visits to temples founded by Kōbō Daishi (Kūkai, 774 – 835) on the island of Shikoku. During one extended trip, he created scores of quickly rendered drawings at numerous Buddhist sites. Restrained in color, the albums are rendered in fluid brushstrokes; the bleeding dark inks provide definition and structure to the ink washes of highly varied gradations. In August and September of each of the seven years, Ryūshi exhibited works from successive pilgrimages at the annual exhibitions of Seiryū-sha.



124a



124b



125

Kawai Gyokudō, 1873–1957

Spring Light, 1948
(Shunkō)

Hanging scroll: color on silk
57.5×71.5 cm.
Private collection

The first Hakuju-kai or "Gathering of the Seniors" was an invitational exhibition organized by the Takashimaya department store in 1948. The title of the show referred to the advanced age of the artists, all of whom were over seventy. By the time he did this painting, Gyokudō was 75 years old and ranked among the most distinguished artists of his generation. Although *Spring Light* is based on familiar rural patterns of animals, rice paddies, and fields, the artist abstracts large areas of the painting by employing the acute but wholly traditional bird's-eye view of *Yamato-e*.

Receptivity and Response: Scenic Sites

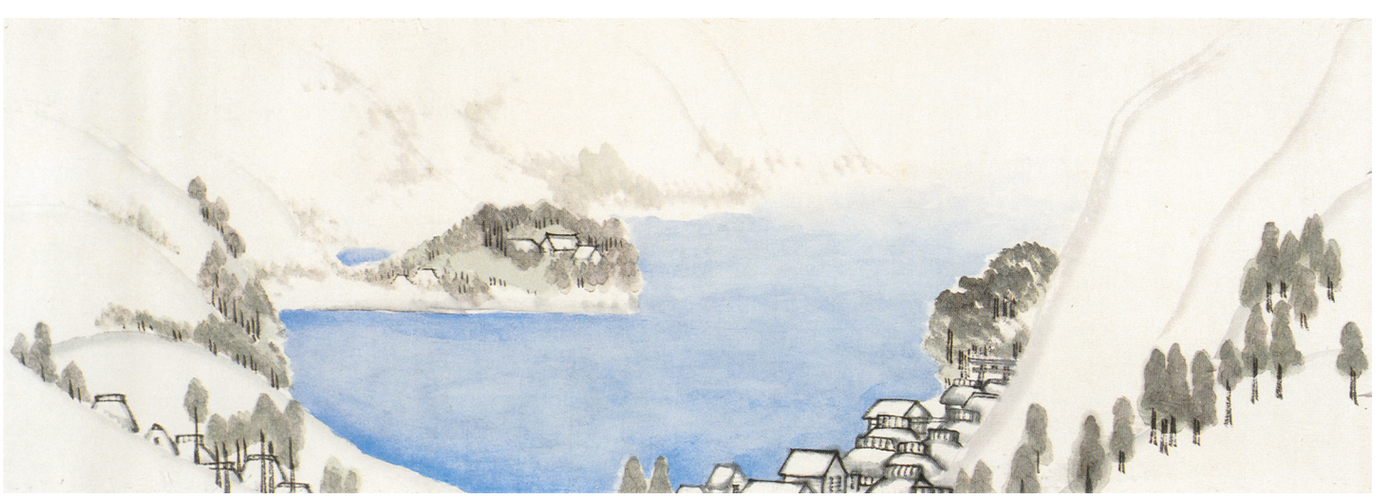
As a sub-category of landscape painting, the depiction of scenic sites is derived from traditional Edo *meisho-e*, the painting of places noteworthy for their history, architecture, or famous views. Many scenic sites have literary and pictorial associations, such as the *Eight Views of Ōmi* or the *Fifty-Three Stations of the Tōkaidō*. *Nihonga* artists take up these themes, often altering them significantly or creating new sets for one place or another in reference to local sites and traditions. (SDO)

126

Imamura Shikō, 1880–1916
Kosugi Hōan, 1881–1964
Shimomura Kanzan, 1873–1930
Yokoyama Taikan, 1868–1958
Handscroll of the Fifty-Three Stations of Tōkaidō, 1915
(Tōkaidō gojūsan-tsugi emaki)

First and second handscrolls from a set of nine: color on paper
31.3×951.5 cm. each
Tokyo National Museum

The Tōkaidō (Eastern Sea Road) is an ancient route connecting Kyoto and Tokyo that runs mainly along the Pacific coast from east to west. Its 53 stations and scenic views, which were celebrated by the *ukiyo-e* master Andō Hiroshige (1797–1858) in his famous wood-block prints, set the itinerary for four artist friends on a trip in March 1915. Yokoyama Taikan, Imamura Shikō, Shimomura Kanzan, and Kosugi Hōan travelled 300 miles in 19 days, sketching along the way. As they rested at inns, they completed their paintings and assigned themselves scenes to sketch the following day. They created nine handscrolls and later exhibited them that June in the Takashimaya department store in Osaka. The first two scrolls trace the trip from Nihonbashi in Tokyo to Lake Hakone.



Imamura Shikō, Lake Hakone: scroll 2, scene 5



Scroll 1



Kosugi Hōan, Nihonbashi: scroll 1, scene 1



Yokoyama Taikan, Hakone Miyanoshita: scroll 2, scene 4



Shimomura Kanzan, Hodogaya: scroll 1, scene 6



Descending Geese at Katada



Evening Rain at Karasaki



127 *Evening Glow at Seta*



Evening Bell from Miidera Temple

127

Shimomura Kanzan, 1873–1930

Eight Views of Ōmi, c.1926
(Ōmi hakkei)

Album: ink and light color on silk
36×24 cm.
Private collection

Although he had been trained in Kanō painting by Kanō Hōgai and Hashimoto Gahō, Kanzan was also a serious student of Chinese painting of the Song and Yuan dynasties. The suggestive power of the brush is apparent in the paintings' subtle ink and color washes that evoke the mist-laden monochromatic landscapes of older styles. Kanzan's *Eight Views of Ōmi* is based on a literary theme of the early sixteenth century. In 1500, the poet Konoe Masaie (1444–1505) selected eight scenic sites along Lake Biwa, Japan's largest freshwater body, in emulation of the traditional Chinese painting subject *Eight Views of the Xiao and Xiang* (Shōshō hakkei), which by the mid-fifteenth century had become a standard theme in Japanese ink painting.

128

Imamura Shikō, 1880–1916

Eight Views of Ōmi: Evening Glow at Seta, Evening Rain at Karasaki, 1912
(Ōmi hakkei zu no uchi Seta sekishō, Karasaki yau)

Two hanging scrolls from a set of eight: color on paper
165×58.9 cm. each
Tokyo National Museum
Important Cultural Property

In May of 1912, Shikō took a boat trip on Lake Biwa, making sketches of the lake's eight scenic sites (*Ōmi hakkei*) that were commemorated in the poetry of Konoe Masaie. Returning to Odawara, the artist spent two months making preparatory sketches, then sent for large sheets of fine Echizen paper on which to paint. Shown at the fifth Bunten, the scrolls caused a great stir as their bold combinations of theme, style, technique, and media split the opinions of the conservative and progressive art worlds. Shikō's inventive handling of azurite blue and malachite green, the spare and elegant stylistic borrowings from literati painting, and the masterful compositional arrangements all reinvigorated a beloved traditional theme.



128 *Evening Glow at Seta*



Evening Rain at Karasaki



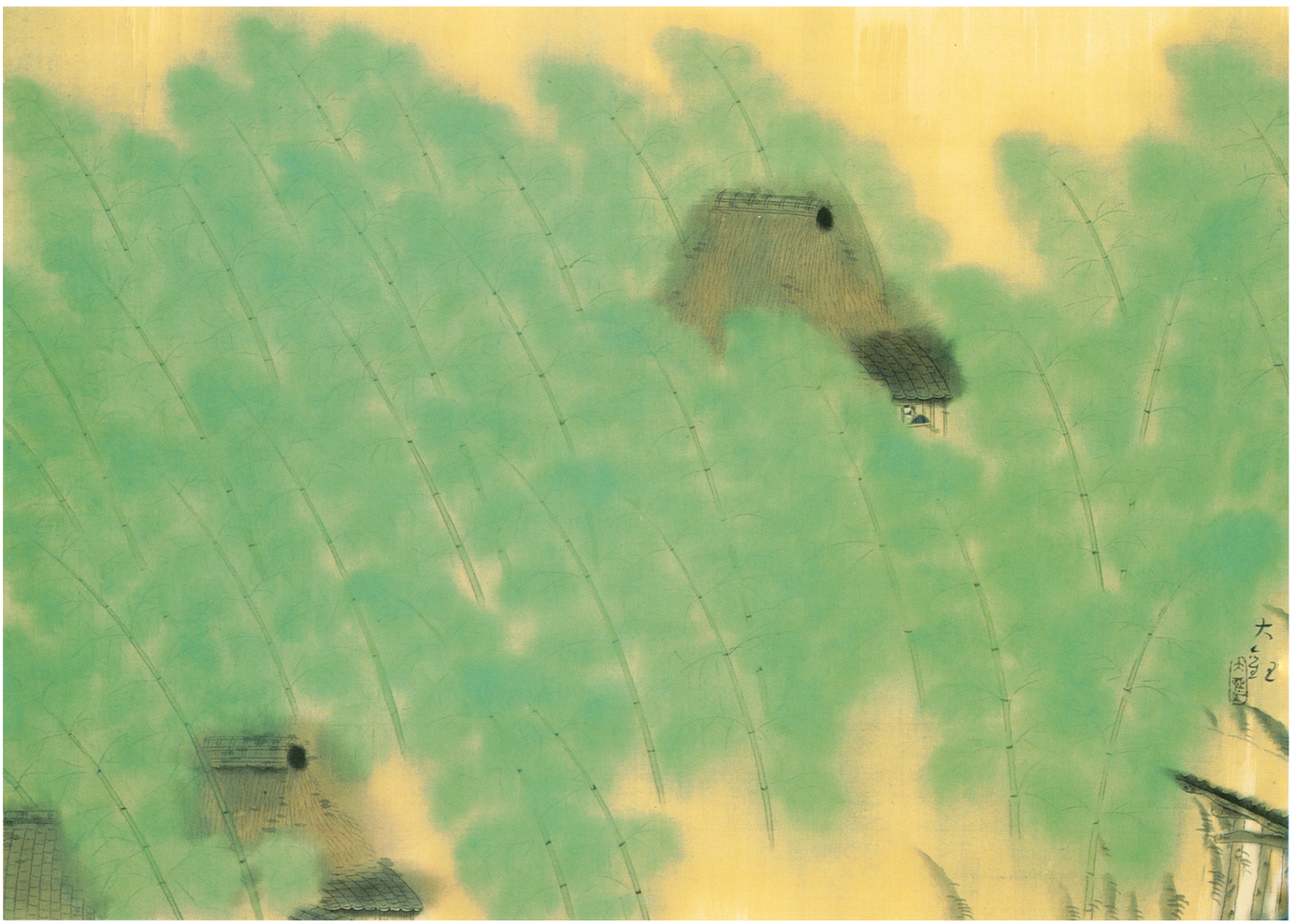
129a

Yokoyama Taikan, 1868–1958

Ten Scenes of Rain In and Around Kyoto: Sanjō Bridge in Rain, 1919
(Rakuchūrakugai ame jū-dai no uchi Sanjō Ōhashi ame)

Hanging scroll: color on silk
49.8×70.2 cm.
The Jōyō Geibun Center, Mito

Sanjō Ōhashi is the famous Kyoto bridge that spans the Kamo River, linking the foothills of Higashiyama in the east with the western expanse of the city. Built in 1590, the bridge retains only its massive bronze fittings from the original structure. Taikan renders the scene as a series of repeating vertical motifs, from the high, multi-tiered pagoda and tower in the distance to the people and posts on the bridge. As shorthand and intentionally reductive as his rendition seems, the artist nonetheless conveys the movement of inclement weather over the river: flowing south, the Kamo's waters are ruffled by the same wind that drives the rain into the tilted umbrellas and swaying figures.



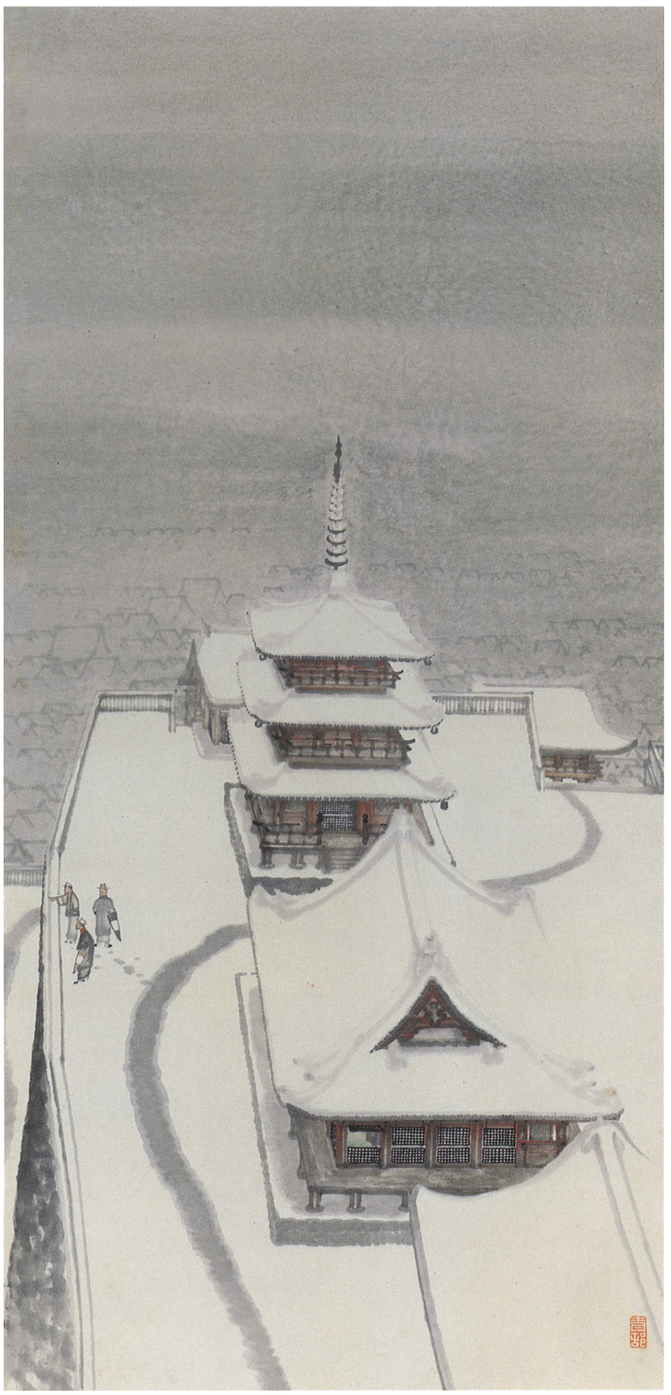
129b

Yokoyama Taikan, 1868–1958

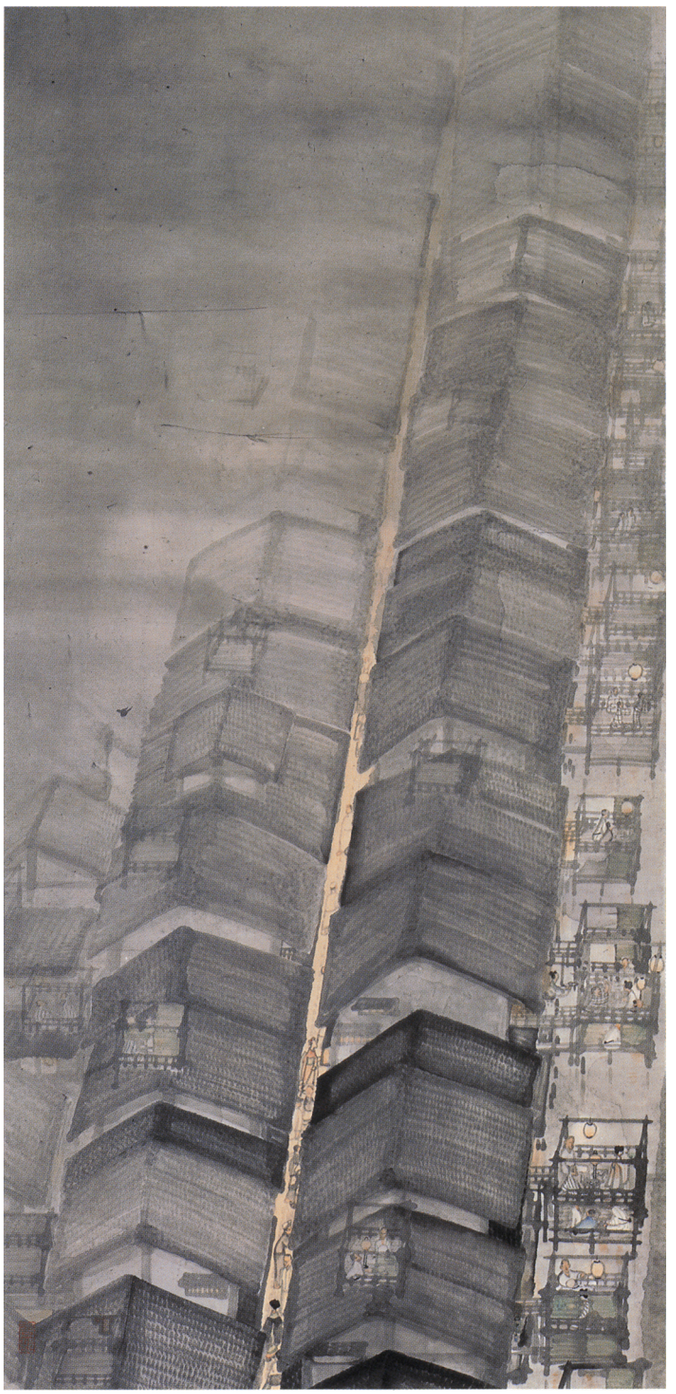
Ten Scenes of Rain In and Around Kyoto: Rain on Green Bamboo at Yawata, 1919
(Rakuchūrakugai ame jū-dai no uchi Yawata ryokuu)

Hanging scroll: color on silk
50.9×70.3 cm.
The Museum of Modern Art, Shiga

A popular form of decorative painting during the Edo period depicted Kyoto *meisho*, the "famous sites" in and around the capital. Part architecture, part landscape, and part genre painting, their popularity stemmed from the enjoyment of looking for and identifying the well-known sites of the city. Here, Taikan modifies the old Kyoto theme with the element of rain. Included in this exhibition are two of six extant works from the original set of ten paintings in his rain series. In the scene of Yawata, he depicts the noted bamboo groves of the rural area just southeast of Kyoto with soft, delicate strokes. The traditional thatched roofs of farmhouses play counterpoint to the rhythmic green patterns of the rain-swept bamboo.



Kiyomizudera Temple



Ponto-chō

130

Maeda Seison, 1885–1977

Eight Celebrated Sites of Kyoto: Ponto-chō, Kiyomizudera Temple, 1916
(Kyō meisho hachi-dai no uchi Ponto-chō, Kiyomizudera)

Two hanging scrolls from a set of eight:
ink and light color on paper
127.4×60.7 cm. each
Tokyo National Museum

The natural contrast of summer and winter seasons makes these two paintings the perennial favorites from the eight-scroll set by Seison. The Ponto-chō, a narrow alley of restaurants on the west bank of the Kamo River, is shown from a startling height similar to the high vista above the three-story pagoda at Kiyomizudera. The two paintings juxtapose the very detailed features of a crowded neighborhood along the river with a grand overview of the snow-shrouded city from the temple in the eastern hills. The virtuoso use of ink connects the works with Rinpa and older traditions. The scrolls are insightful cultural portraits of Kyoto in which Seison captures the charm of contemporary life and the historical ambiance of the ancient capital.

Receptivity and Response: Social Observation

Nihonga artists adapted the category of *fūzoku-ga*, the traditional genre painting of customs and manners that evolved during the early sixteenth century, as a vehicle for social commentary and representation. Farm life, cottage industries, daily activities, modern sports, and contemporary events were all closely observed and recorded. This genre could also include war and other catastrophes.

(SDO)

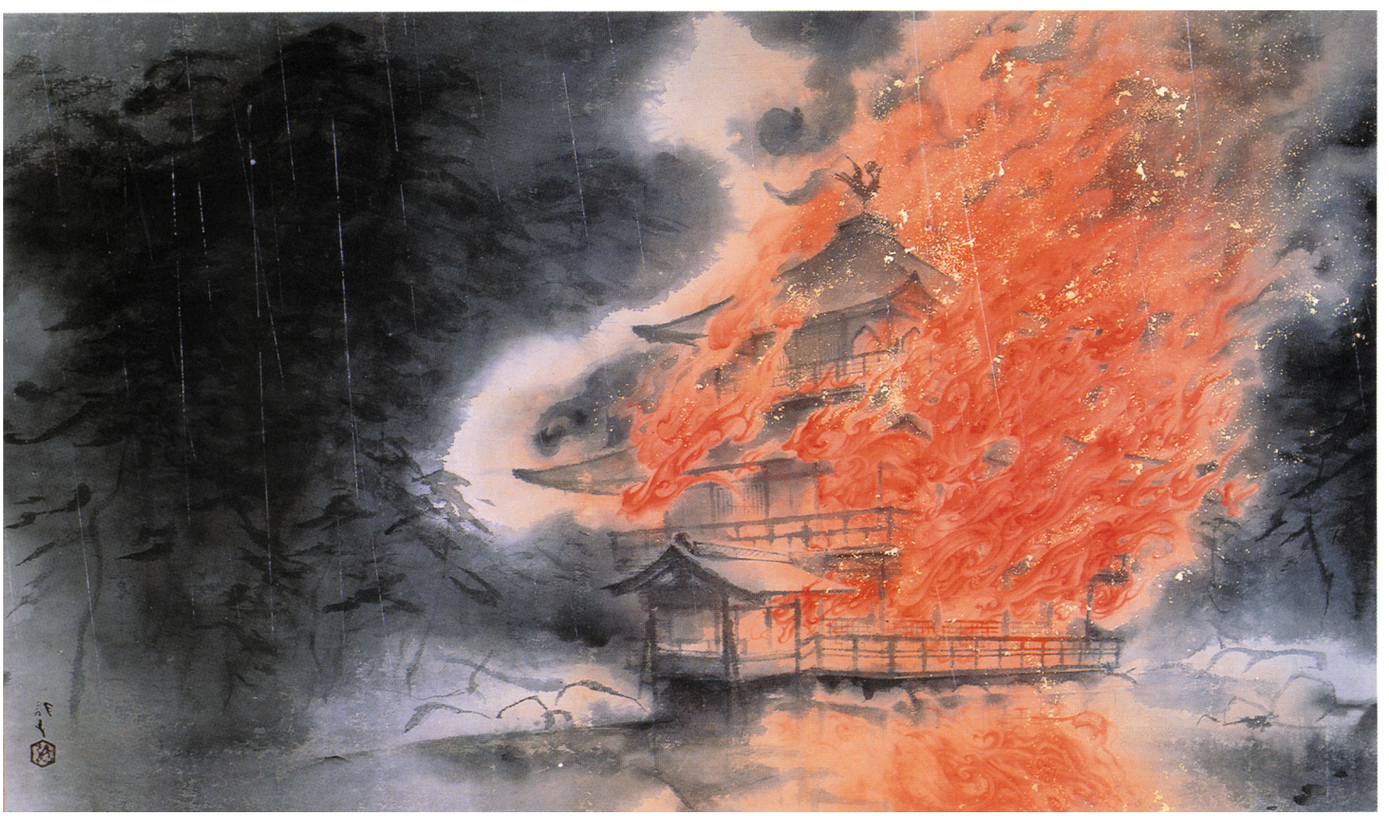
131

Kawabata Ryūshi, 1885–1966

The Golden Pavilion in Flames, 1950
(Kinkaku enjō)

Hanging scroll: color on paper
142×239 cm.
The National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo

In July of 1950, the Golden Pavilion in Kyoto was burned to the ground by a crazed monk. The destruction of one of Japan's enduring symbols of beauty shocked and saddened Ryūshi, who shortly afterward created this picture of the fourteenth-century Zen temple ablaze in crimson and gold. Disparaged as "news painting," the image was nonetheless representative of the widespread and deep sentiment at the loss of the famous building which was fictionalized in *Temple of the Golden Pavilion*, the 1956 novel by Mishima Yukio (1925–1970).





132

Murakami Kagaku, 1888–1939

Season of Rice Planting, 1912
(Taue no koro)

Two-panel screen: color on silk
158.3×192 cm.
The National Museum of Modern Art, Kyoto

Season of Rice Planting is an early work by Kagaku painted a year after his graduation from Kyoto Municipal Special School of Painting (Kyoto Shiritsu Kaiga Senmon Gakkō). Like his well-known graduation painting, *Around February* (Nigatsu no koro), which he showed with great success at the fifth Bunten in 1911, this screen is a rural agricultural scene shown from the elevated vantage point of a hillock overlooking a plain, that here stretches to the far horizon. Using heavy applications of malachite green and Chinese white, Kagaku depicts a pastoral landscape of farmers planting rice amidst spring rain and wildflowers in a somewhat Western, romantic manner.



133

Kobayashi Kokei, 1883–1957

Threshing Grain, 1919
(Mugi)

Framed: color on paper
144×105.2 cm.
Tokyo National Museum

In reviews of the sixth exhibition of the Japan Art Institute (Nihon Bijutsu-in), Kokei received nearly unanimous praise for the coloration, technique, and subject of this painting. The scene is taken from the small farming village of Oshimi in Nara Prefecture during harvest time; the picture was acclaimed for capturing the enduring qualities of agricultural life particular to the ancient Yamato region. Kokei creates a pervasive atmospheric quality which is heightened by the softly shadowed forms of the farmhouses. The "one-sided shading" or *katabokashi* technique that Kokei employs was familiar among both *Nihonga* and *yōga* artists from their studies of European painting as well as from the native *Yamato-e* style.



134

Kobayashi Kokei, 1883–1957

Weaving, 1926
(Hataori)

Framed: color on silk
138.4×171.8 cm.
The National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo

Kokei depicts two women weaving *kasuri*, a cotton cloth with hazed patterns of resist-dyed threads that when woven determine the textile design. The simple treadle looms stand out starkly from the picture's blank, tea-colored ground. After returning from Europe in 1923 where he copied the British Museum's famous scroll, *Admonitions of the Instructress*, attributed to Gu Kaizhi (c.344–c.406), Kokei's figures resonate with the elegant and archetypal character of ancient Chinese and Japanese works. Here Kokei reveals his employment of *yōga* techniques in the application of Western pigments in the threads of the fabric, a practice he found not in the least contradictory to his pursuit of *Nihonga* ideals.



Detail

135

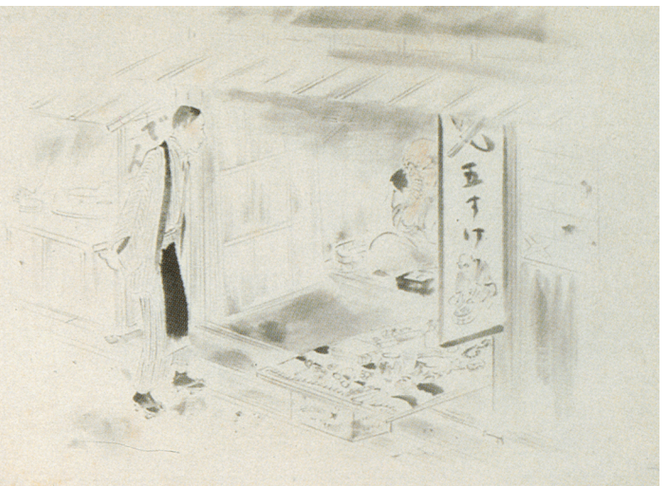
Yamaguchi Hōshun, 1893–1971, et al.

Scenes from Modern Life, 1922–1928
(Gendai fūzoku emaki)

Handscroll: color on paper
28.4×967 cm.
Museum of the Imperial Collections, Tokyo

In 1921, Matsuoka Eikyū (1881–1938) founded the New *Yamato-e* Society (Shinkō Yamato-e-kai) which held annual exhibitions and was dedicated to the modernization of the *Yamato-e* tradition. Using the handscroll format and the thick application of intensely rich mineral colors typical of *Yamato-e*, Eikyū depicted contemporary life and customs. His private teaching atelier or *juku*, called the Tokonatsu-sō (House of Eternal Summer), became known for its collaborative works based on modern literature and the urban landscapes of cosmopolitan Tokyo. *Scenes from Modern Life* is a collaboration by Eikyū and eleven associates. Eikyū contributed a scene of the Imperial Palace in the center of Tokyo and his student Yamaguchi Hōshun depicted a scene of golfing. The other ten scenes show military exercises, a village elementary school, rice harvesting, a department store, spinning factories, whaling, Hōryūji Temple, a concert pavilion, a Kabuki theater, and the Tokyo station.













136



137

136

Kaburaki Kiyokata, 1878–1972

Sketches for The Order Book, 1927
(Chūmonjō)

Set of thirteen album leaves: light color on paper
25.3×34.6 cm. each
Kamakura City

Kiyokata illustrated the works of writers, including the novelist Izumi Kyōka (1873–1939), who was known for his grotesque, supernatural, and beautiful tales about Edo culture, especially the pleasure district of the Yoshiwara which is the setting for *The Order Book.* Kiyokata used this story as the basis for his album and described it as the first in a series of "painted tales." The small-scale work is a fine early example of what the artist promoted as more intimate "tabletop art" (*takujō geijutsu*), i.e., paintings held and appreciated in one's hands as distinct from larger works meant for the traditional painting alcove or exhibition hall.

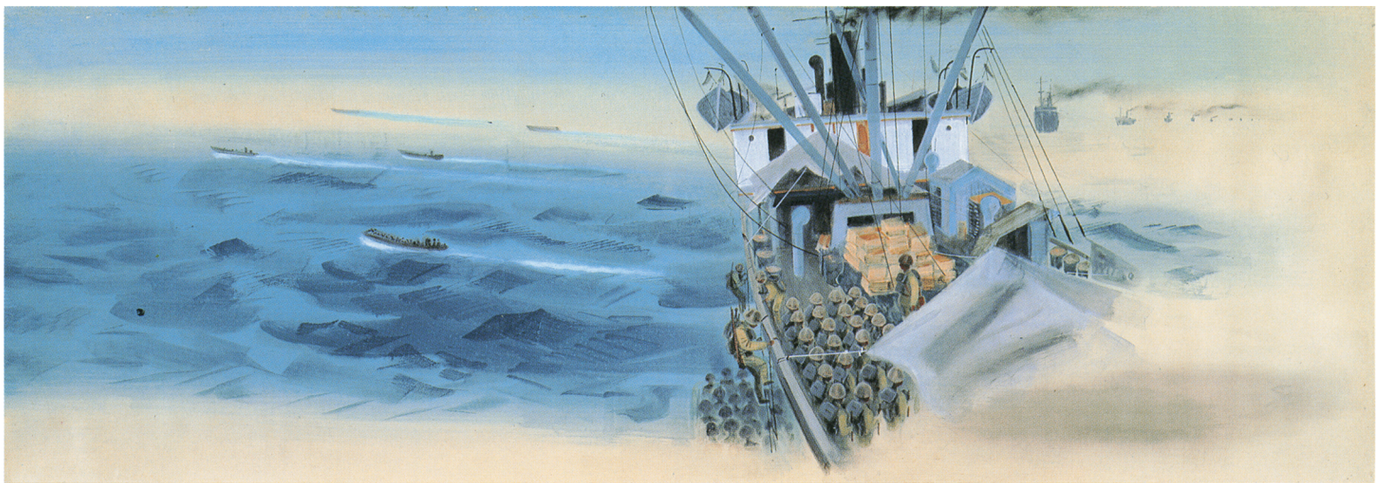
137

Yasuda Yukihiko, 1884–1978

Evening Entertainment by the Kamo River, 1932–1934
(Kamogawa yajō)

Hanging scroll: light color on paper
86×119.9 cm.
Shuzenji-chō, Shizuoka Prefecture

This painting is an imaginative re-creation of a meeting described by the nineteenth-century literati painter Tanomura Chikuden (1777–1835). In his writings on painting, Chikuden described how he and the scholar-poet Rai San'yō (1780–1832) spent a summer's evening by Kyoto's Kamo River. Chatting about their mutual friend, the artist Aoki Mokubei (1767–1833), the two walked to the river's edge and talked until very late. In the guise of traditional genre painting, Yukihiko renders the scene of the three literati enjoying the coolness of the river on a warm evening. Taking artistic license, he includes Mokubei who was absent in Chikuden's original narrative.



Scroll 1



Scroll 3



Scroll 4

138

Fukuda Toyoshirō, 1904–1970

Handscroll of the Malaysia Campaign, 1944

(Marē sakusen emaki)

Set of six handscrolls: color on paper
64×181 cm. each
The Akita Museum of Modern Art

In 1942, Toyoshirō was sent to Southeast Asia as a war correspondent for the Army to record the invasion of the Malay Peninsula and the capture of Singapore. Although the occupation of Malaysia was among the military's early successes, this work was executed and shown at the second Army Art Exhibition (*Rikugun bijutsu ten*) in 1944, when Japan had begun to suffer setbacks and shifting fortunes. The destruction of British ships in the Battle of the South China Sea and the fall of Singapore are shown from such a distance and with such coloristic skill as to obscure the action and dull the visual impact of the fighting.



139

Kikuchi Keigetsu, 1879–1955

Welcoming the Imperial Carriage, 1943
(Geihōren)

Hanging scroll: color on silk
64.2×72.6 cm.
Adachi Museum of Art, Yasugi

In *Welcoming the Imperial Carriage*, Keigetsu portrays the paragon of imperial loyalty, Kusunoki Masashige (d.1336), as chronicled in the tale *Taiheiki* (The Record of the Great Peace, c.1372), bowing before the carriage of Emperor Go-Daigo (reigned 1318–1339) at their historic meeting in Hyōgo in 1333. In 1943, Japan was maintaining a positive military position throughout the Pacific Theater of World War II. Supplies of raw materials from Southeast Asia continued, the Chinese fought among themselves, and American forces were held at bay. While there were reversals in the military's progress, there were still reasonable prospects for the future. The patriotic theme of this work was appropriate to the support of the government, especially in the unswerving fealty exemplified by the hero Masashige.



140

Kawabata Ryūshi, 1885–1966

Tattoo, 1948
(Irezumi)

Framed: color on paper
160×248 cm.
Ryūshi Memorial Art Museum of Ōta-ku, Tokyo

Dramatic and daring, Ryūshi delves headlong into the eroticism of body tattoo and its practice among the demimonde. Set against a dark cloth, the pale nude fills the picture with contorted but voluptuous forms. The allure of the naked figure is heightened by the sensual shapes of her fingers and toes and the floral tracery across her bare arms and back. Ryūshi's figure is bold by triple measure: as an undoubted legacy from his early study of *yōga*, he treats the nude unambiguously and with authority while suggesting an ecstatic state in the subtle digital postures used in *ukiyo-e* and *shunga* (erotic painting and prints); finally, he includes the provocative tattoo, linking the figure with the modern urban underworld.



141

Maeda Seison, 1885–1977

Women Bathing, 1956
(Yokujo gunzō)

Framed: color on paper
212.6×157.7 cm.
The Museum of Modern Art, Shiga

With only a few audacious exceptions, the subject of the nude has been handled gingerly by *Nihonga* artists. While timeless allusions to *ukiyo-e*, *bijin-ga* (painting of beautiful women), and the demimonde are made in modern paintings of the nude, Seison treats the Japanese custom of communal bathing at public bath houses, inns, and hot springs as a wholly contemporary genre scene. Composing his figures in a spatially complex but shallow plane, Seison masterfully conveys the corporeality of this close-knit group by using a line of muted crimson that occasionally fades to pink. The verisimilitude of these seventeen figures conveyed by this colored line can be traced back to the use of red outlines employed to depict Buddhist deities in ancient times.

Receptivity and Response: The World Without

Relative affluence and the peace of the years between the World Wars enabled *Nihonga* artists to travel and study in distant places. Journeys to Europe, America, and Asia exposed them to diverse cultures and new experiences. Many of the artists made frequent visits to other countries as a means of renewing their art and providing them with unusual techniques, subjects, and themes.

(SDO)



142



143

142

Takeuchi Seihō, 1864–1942

Scenery of Southern China, 1926
(Nanshi fūshoku)

Hanging scroll: color on paper
76×85 cm.
Maeda Ikutokukai Foundation, Tokyo

Seihō's landscapes tend to feature figures in a secondary position to scenes of the town or terrain. *Scenery of Southern China* is a notable exception, in which the daily activities of the people are shown quite nearly as in traditional genre painting. Seihō portrays a waterside neighborhood, perhaps in the garden city of Suzhou, where the pace of life around a small bridge quickens with the crossing of a herd of pigs. The impressionistic nature of the painting is unique to Seihō's style and is without Chinese or Japanese precedent. Like many paintings of China that the artist created, this work is based on Seihō's memory and sketches from trips he took to the continent in 1921 and 1922 which inspired this fresh, new style.

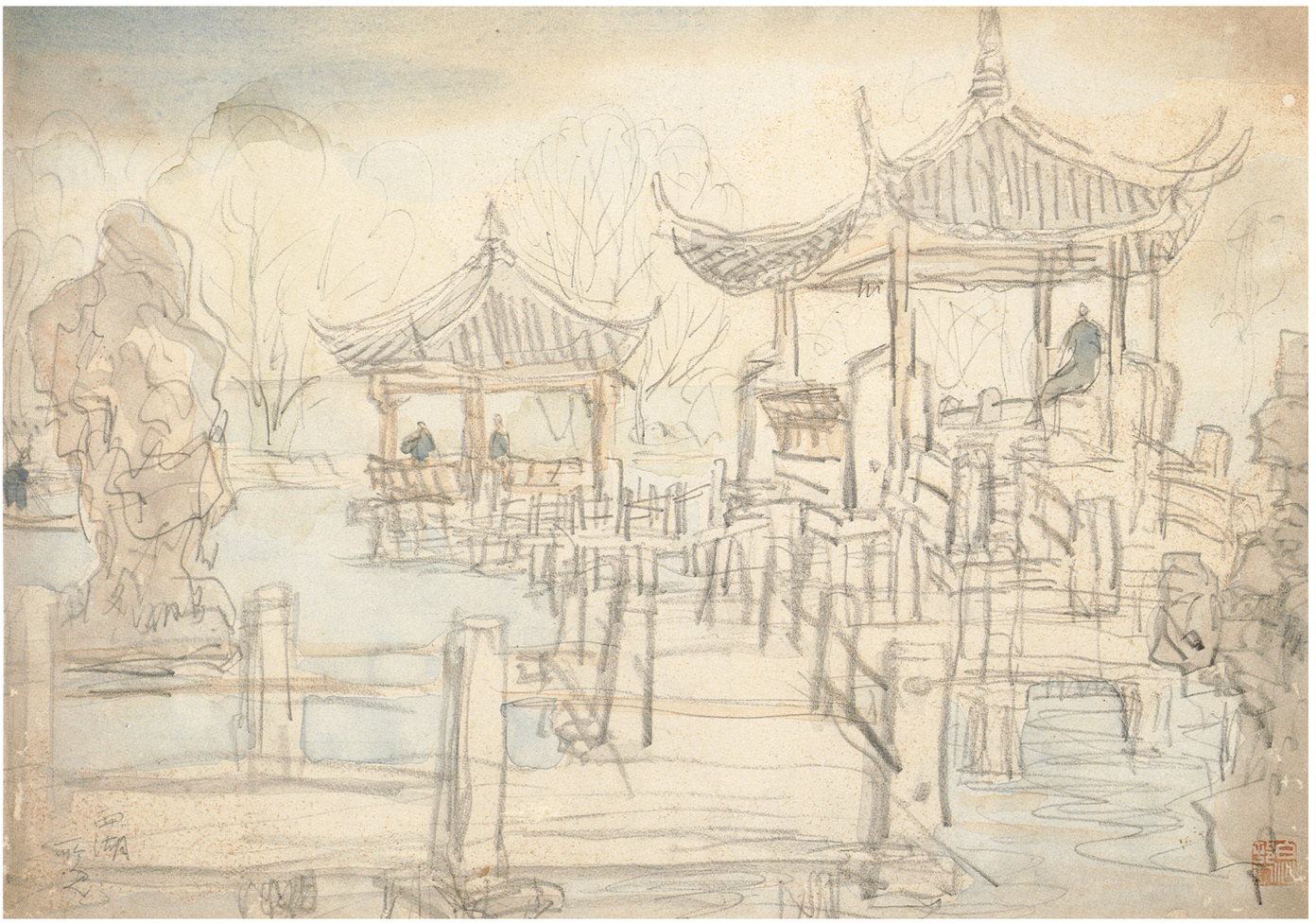
143

Takeuchi Seihō, 1864–1942

Fragrant Breeze Outside the City Wall, 1930
(Jōgai fūkun)

Hanging scroll: color on silk
88×115.7 cm.
Yamatane Museum of Art, Tokyo

Ten years after his initial trip to the continent, Seihō continued to paint from sketches and memory beautifully rendered scenes of south China. This work is most likely an imaginary scene of Suzhou, the so-called "Venice of China," known for its extensive network of canals and picturesque bridges. The title and style of the work reflect the increasingly impressionistic and poetic character of the artist's later landscapes that brilliantly elaborated upon Seihō's own subtle coloristic approach to traditional ink painting. Here the artist simplifies the pictorial elements, reducing them to flattened planes of color and texture.



144

Hashimoto Kansetsu, 1883–1945

View of West Lake, 1923
(Saiko shoken)

Album leaf (framed): color on paper
37.5×52.8 cm.
Hashimoto Kansetsu Memorial Museum and Garden, Kyoto

Born the son of a Confucian scholar, Kansetsu was greatly attracted to China and its rich culture. He made the first of his numerous trips to the continent in 1913; employed Chinese themes, subjects, and styles, especially those of literati painting, in his own work; and later collected Chinese art. Here he depicts West Lake near Hangzhou in one of the many garden areas along its shores. This appears to be one of his pencil sketches done on the site. He later added light watercolors to better distinguish the elaborate pavilions, bridges, and eccentric garden stones placed in the lake's waters.



Detail

145

Maeda Seison, 1885–1977

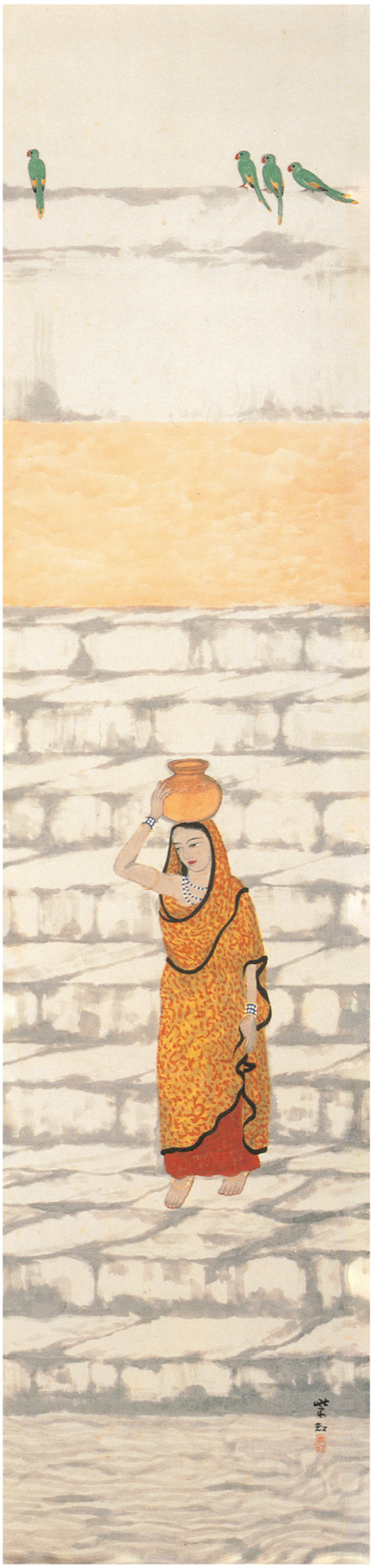
Handscroll of Korea, 1915

(Chōsen no maki)

Handscroll: ink and light color on paper
33×1089.5 cm.
Tokyo National Museum

Five years after Japan had annexed the Korean peninsula in 1915, Seison made a trip to Korea. The landscape and figural portions of this long handscroll record his travels from Pusan to Pyongyong and readily expose Seison's early penchant for depicting scenes from high and unusual viewpoints, reminiscent of *Yamato-e* and Tosa-school perspectives. He convincingly conveys the local color of Korea in a stylistically free use of ink and brush akin to the literati tradition. As a contemporary theme, Korea and its culture had an immediate appeal to both Seison and his public.





146

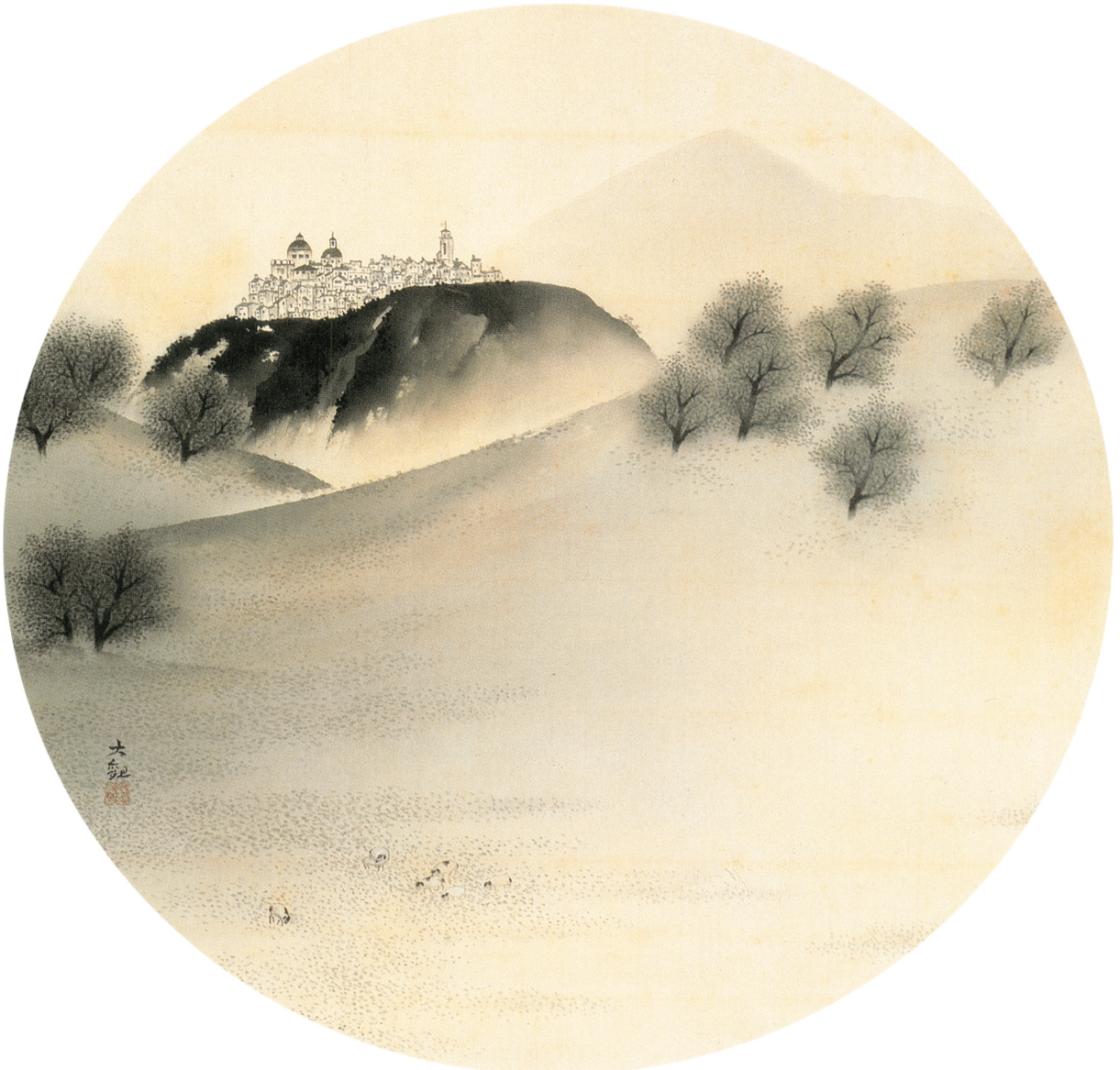
Imamura Shikō, 1880–1916

Woman Drawing Water, Men Herding Ox, 1914

(Mizu kumu onna, Ushi kau otoko)

Pair of hanging scrolls: color on paper
137×32.2 cm. each
The Hiratsuka Museum of Art

Like Okakura Tenshin, Yokoyama Taikan, and Hishida Shunsō before him, Shikō made a trip to India. With no visa and little in the way of funds, he managed to stay for two weeks. Making his way back from India through south China, Manchuria, and Korea, he arrived in Kobe three months later. The short but fruitful Indian experience provided the inspiration for this pair of paintings and his best known work, the *Handscrolls of Tropical Country* (Nekkoku no maki), 1914. In response to the color and customs of India, he altered his painting style to employ an uncluttered manner derived from literati painting. Shikō combined bright, rich pigments, with the native folk quality and expression inherent in the culture of the Indian sub-continent.



147

Yokoyama Taikan, 1868–1958

Spring in Rome, 1930
(Rōma no haru)

Hanging scroll: ink on paper
54 cm. diameter
Yokoyama Taikan Memorial Hall, Tokyo

In January 1930, Taikan was sent to Europe with the Ōkura mission to participate in the Japanese art exhibition in Rome, where he showed fourteen paintings. On his return, he painted this unusual view of the ancient city perched on a hill and seen from a far distance over fields and grazing sheep. The painting was done largely with minute stippling and broad washes and has a surprising miniaturistic quality similar to twelfth-century Chinese album painting. The work is a marvelous conceit in which Taikan pictures Rome, the symbol of Western civilization, from a distinctly chauvinistic perspective.



148

Irie Hakō, 1887–1948

Green Grove, 1923
(Sōrin zu)

Hanging scroll: color on silk
35.6×42 cm.
The National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo

Receiving a grant from the Kyoto municipal government, Hakō toured Europe in 1922. Like Takeuchi Seihō before him, Hakō was impressed by the landscape and culture of Europe. He was especially taken with the technique of fresco painting, the character of which he absorbed and captured in his own works. In this small painting, the artist paints an impressionistic vision of the verdant woods of Italy. Working in mineral colors on silk, Hakō presents a dream-like world of shadow and light; he continued to paint Mediterranean scenes as part of his repertoire until the mid-1920s.

149

Tsuchida Bakusen, 1887–1936

Renoir's Garden, 1922
(Runoāru no niwa)

Framed: light color and pencil on paper
24×27 cm.
Osaka City Museum of Modern Art

150

Tsuchida Bakusen, 1887–1936

Scenery at Vétheuil, 1922
(Vetoiyu fūkei)

Framed: tempera on canvas
45.8×61 cm.
Ōhara Museum of Art, Kurashiki

In 1922, Bakusen travelled to south France, Italy, Spain, England, and France. While there, he became interested in Western painting techniques, especially fresco and tempera. In April of the following year, Bakusen journeyed to Vétheuil, where he spent six months painting landscapes in tempera, gouache, and watercolors. Bakusen also visited the European residences and studios of painters. In Paris, he went to and perhaps studied at the studio of Charles François Prosper Guérin (1875–1939). In the south of France, he visited Renoir's garden at Cagnes. Like many *Nihonga* artists, Bakusen was technically so versatile that his sketches are virtually indistinguishable from those of Western artists.



149



150



151

151

Kobayashi Kokei, 1883–1957

Laundry Place II, 1926
(Sentaku-ba II)

Framed: color on silk
59×73 cm.
Aichi Prefectural Museum of Art

152

Kobayashi Kokei, 1883–1957

Laundry Place I, 1926
(Sentaku-ba I)

Framed: color on silk
59×73 cm.
Aichi Prefectural Museum of Art

In 1922, Kokei and Maeda Seison were sent to Europe by the Japan Art Institute (Nihon Bijutsu-in). They travelled to England, Italy, France, and Egypt on a journey that lasted eleven months. While they were in Italy, the artists visited Siena where Kokei sketched these scenes of women doing laundry, against the historic archways and in the cobbled streets of the old city. Three years after his return to Japan, Kokei created this pair of works, apparently the only paintings he ever made that refer directly to his European trip. As in his most effective works after 1917, Kokei pursues the ordinary pace of everyday life in rhythms and surroundings that were centuries, even millennia, old.



152

Postwar Trends: Absorption and Amalgamation

The first two postwar decades, from 1945 to 1968, saw still more transformations in the development of *Nihonga*. Younger painters appeared with new energies and championed fresh aesthetic possibilities. These derived both from a changed and more open Japanese culture as well as from new developments in the visual arts around the world.

As Japanese contemporary art of all kinds began to receive international attention, *Nihonga* painters found themselves increasingly open to new ideas and movements. The best paintings of these decades often show a fresh and experimental look, expressing the rising interest in the possibilities of abstraction. It was the appropriation by *Nihonga* painters of certain elements in this new abstraction, reinforced by their employment of the traditional principles of essentialization in *Nihonga* painting, that give many of these pictures their special appeal.

Subject matter that was traditionally considered a part of the *Nihonga* repertoire certainly continued to be painted, but there are new objects and themes as well: Wall Street, a blast furnace, the ferocious glare of a volcano. While the basic shapes are easy to recognize—tiles on a roof, the shape of a gate, the trajectory of a road into the far distance—the ultimate images created by these artists seem all the more monumental as they move beyond the specific details of their subject matter.

However important such assumptions may have been in the creation of *Nihonga* in the postwar period, the inherited sense of elegance and craft so essential to the tradition still remains an important component in the definition of *Nihonga* as a form of modern Japanese art. It is exemplified by the most recent work in the exhibition, *Star Festival* of 1968 by Kayama Matazō. (JTR)



153

Higashiyama Kaii, b.1908

Road, 1950
(Michi)

Framed: color on paper
134.4×102.2 cm.
The National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo

In 1940, Higashiyama Kaii journeyed northward to Aomori Prefecture on the island of Honshū. He made sketches along the Tanesashi coast, known for its white sand beaches and coral reefs. About ten years later, he returned to the northern coast in search of a scene that he recalled of a road stretching through the hills in early morning light. He rediscovered the scene he had captured in his earlier sketches and found the road still unpaved. The limited palette and the reduction of detail to repeated forms set the emotional and artistic tone for the artist's later work which is characterized by lush, decorative patterning in predominantly blue-green colors with a deep, pervasive tranquillity.



154

Fukuda Heihachirō, 1892–1974

Rain, 1953

(Ame)

Framed: color on paper

108.7×86.5 cm.

The National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo

The *kawara* is the ubiquitous, slate-gray roof tile of Japan. Its very ordinariness is underscored by the dull repetition of its size, color, and shape in the construction of a roof. The structural patterns and familiar monotony of *kawara* are subtly employed by Heihachirō as the basis of *Rain*, which depicts the view from the artist's second-story studio. Intrigued by the mutable character of the tiles in different seasons and weather, Heihachirō painted the scene in a summer shower, the large drops of rain evaporating on the hot, rhythmically set tiles. Since its introduction at the ninth Nitten, *Rain* has come to represent the assertion that realism provides the basis for postwar abstract painting.



155

Tokuoka Shinsen, 1896–1972

Dry Leaves, 1958
(Kareha)

Framed: color on paper
145×114.5 cm.
The National Museum of Modern Art, Kyoto

The non-traditional subject that Shinsen chose for this painting is characteristic of the postwar expansion of *Nihonga's* rather stringently narrow range of appropriate subjects and themes. When it was shown at the first Shin-Nitten exhibition, Shinsen's choice of mundane and humble objects, such as dry, fallen leaves, was criticized as unworthy of the art form and more calculated to provoke controversy than not. Here, he nonetheless successfully exploits commonplace themes to explore the formal qualities of near-abstraction, while ignoring traditional technical constraints by increasing the tactile character of the painting surface with thick applications of pigments suspended in the traditional water-based glue solution.



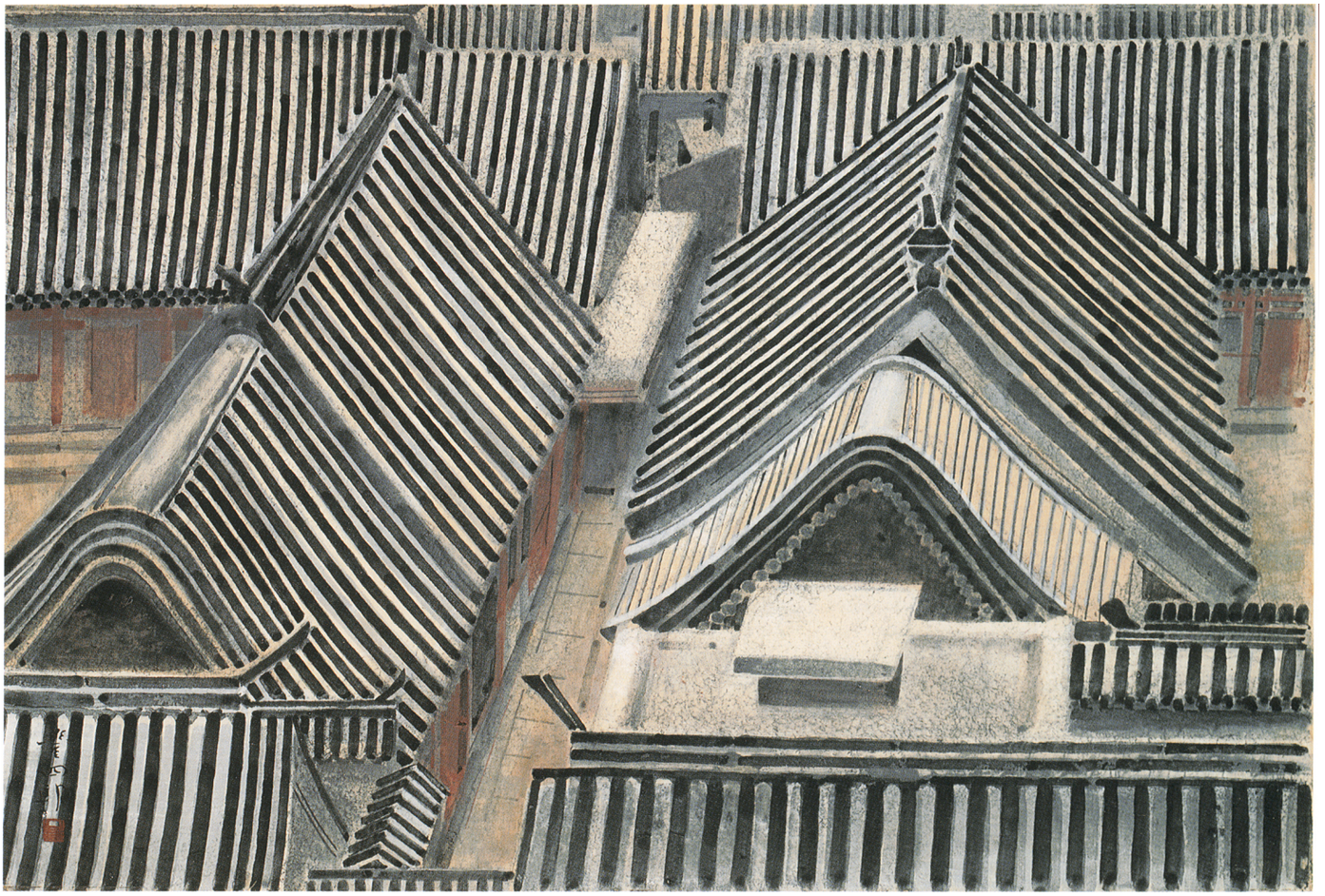
156

Okumura Togyū, 1889–1990

Gate, 1967
(Mon)

Framed: color on paper
100×140 cm.
Yamatane Museum of Art, Tokyo

The elegant soaring towers of Himeiji Castle earned the great fortification the nickname "White Egret." When Togyū first sketched the second gate in 1945, it had been seriously damaged during the war. Viewing the castle after its extensive restoration and satisfied that his former drawings were still accurate, Togyū depicted the great wooden timbers and iron-hinged doors of the entrance in shadow. The yawning square shape of the opening looks out to the gleaming white of a sunstruck plaster-and-tile wall and the sky beyond. In a highly selective composition, Togyū creates a spare, reductive, and abstract image from the architectural elements and view, using existing patterns and repeated geometric shapes to structure his painting.



157

Fukuda Toyoshirō, 1904–1970

Rooftops of Peking, 1957
(Pekin no yane)

Framed: color on paper
50×73 cm.
Collection of Shimoyama Hiroshi

Best known for his lyrical, colored paintings of the prewar era, Toyoshirō's works from the fifties are studies in pattern and tone. In contrast to the microcosmic study of roof tiles depicted in Fukuda Heihachirō's 1953 *Rain* (Plate 154), Toyoshirō's *Rooftops of Peking* takes a high view over the houses and congested alleyways of the Chinese capital. Here geometry and texture are primary elements of the artist's composition, the repetition of line and shape relieved only by touches of color and architectural detail. The high contrast and repeated forms do create, however, harmonies and rhythms in keeping with his earlier paintings.



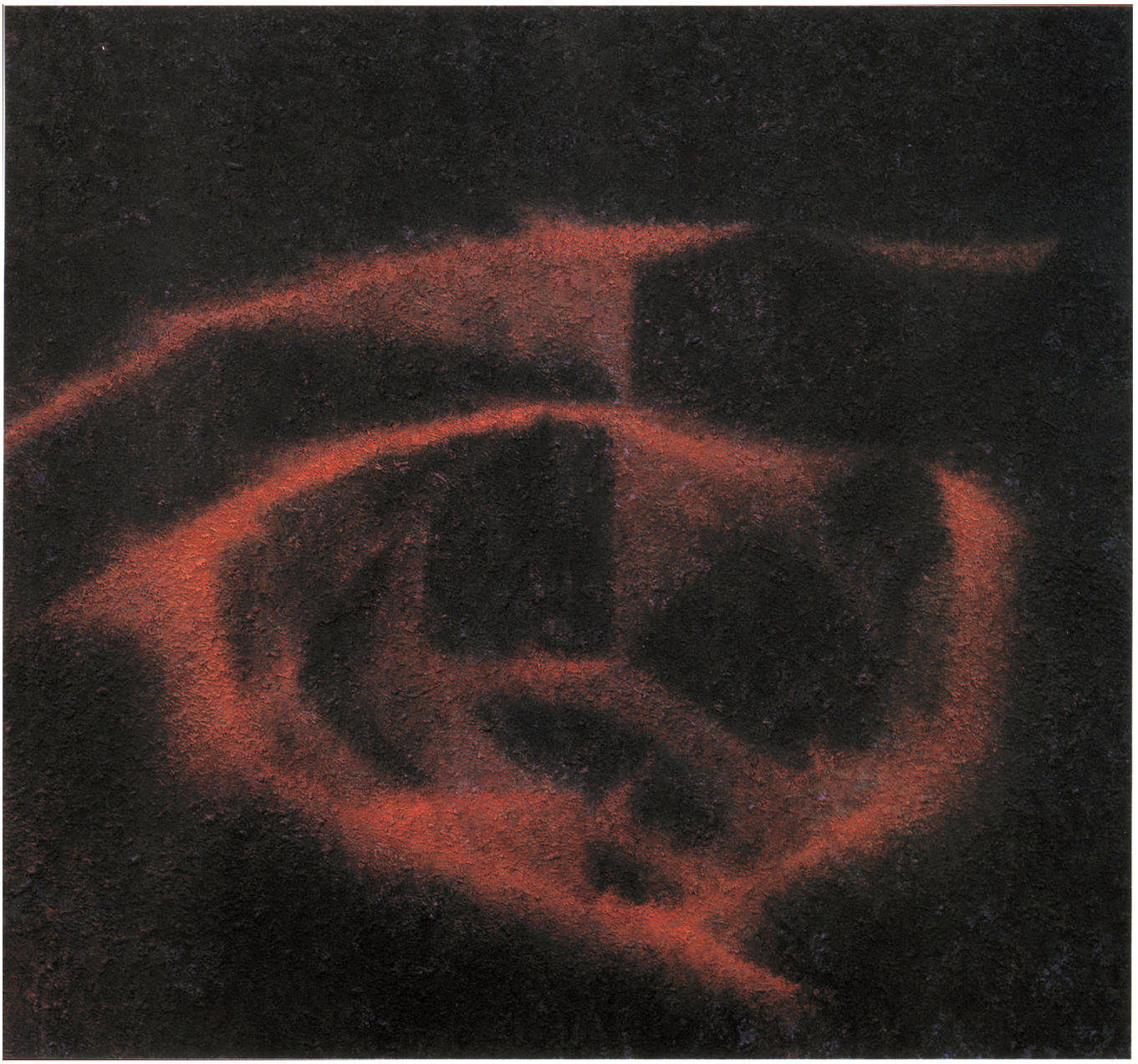
158

Takayama Tatsuo, b.1912

Hilltop, 1957
(Mine)

Framed: color on paper
95.5×133.5 cm.
Private collection

Takayama was one of the postwar artists most able to synthesize the formal elements of modern European painting in a creative manner to achieve a personal approximation of contemporary abstraction. The contrasting colors of sky and earth, the mottled textures defining topography, and the simple silhouettes for hill and trees are subordinate to the subtle but dominant structure of the composition. The painting has been recognized for its evocative "literary" mood.



159

Sugiyama Yasushi, 1909–1993

Heat, 1960
(Shaku)

Framed: color on paper
159.7×172.5 cm.
Collection of Tomita Noriko and Hiraoka Iichirō,

During a visit to Kyūshū, Sugiyama flew past Mount Aso and one of the mountain's five great craters in a helicopter. Its range of fifty miles makes this active volcano on the westernmost island of Kyūshū one of the largest in the world. The artist paints his subject as if seen at night from above; the crater's dark volcanic crust fills the picture and the complex luminosity of its burning rock seems to swirl in a smoldering vortex. The seething red magma glowing from the pit is captured in thick, multiple layers of paint and numerous colors. Devoid of identifying visual markers and orientation, the crater in the painting becomes an abstraction.



160

Yamamoto Kyūjin, 1900–1986

Summer Day, 1961
(Natsu no hi)

Framed: color on silk
63×76.5 cm.
Narukawa Art Forum, Hakone-machi

Kyūjin's postwar landscapes are known for the solid construction of their powerful geologic forms and their dramatic portrayal of the seasons. The vigor of his painting is evident in the thick, roughly applied pigments that build up his images of massive mountains and rocky shores.



161

Yamamoto Kyūjin, 1900–1986

Landscape at Sunset, 1961
(Yūyake sansui)

Framed: color on silk
177×140.5 cm.
Hiraki Ukiyo-e Museum, Yokohama

Although a habitual sketcher, Kyūjin preferred to conjure up his "mind-scapes," mixing and matching various scenes he witnessed on his travels in the mountains. Created with strong black brushstrokes, the wintry subject of *Landscape at Sunset* is a mountain range viewed from the Kantō. The body of water, however, is a scene from the iron bridge over the Sagami River in northern Kanagawa Prefecture in central Honshū, a river that was dammed in 1947 to form an artificial lake. The painting's boldness of execution is softened by the decorative coloration that includes the use of gold and silver.



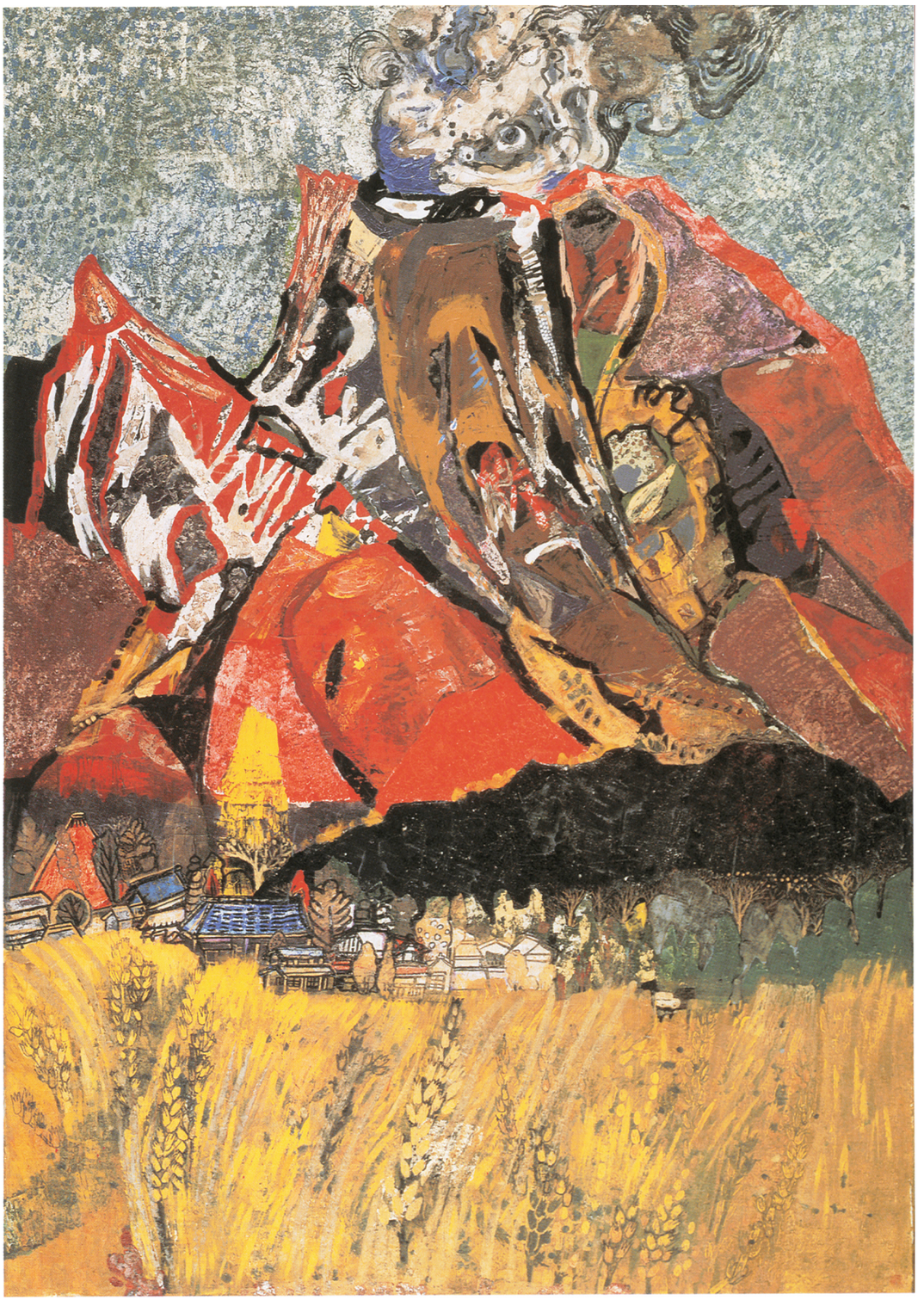
162

Iwahashi Eien, b.1903

Wall, 1955
(Kabe)

Two-panel screen: color on paper
182×182 cm.
The National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo

As an artist in prewar Japan, Eien explored the thin boundary between representation and abstraction while participating in avant-garde Surrealist groups. At the same time, he actively gained recognition in mainstream *Nihonga* circles. After the war, the acceptance of his somewhat brooding works like *Wall* by the *Nihonga* establishment pointed to the fact that distinctions between *Nihonga* and *yōga* had become nearly meaningless. *Wall* creates an immediate tension between what is known as a concrete object and the enigmatic, veiled images of the work. The painting is clearly decorative in character, but the wispy filaments that rise and hang as figural elements throughout the work suggest darker aspects of a vaguely disturbing landscape.



163

Kataoka Tamako, b.1905

***Volcano (Mount Asama)*, 1965**
(Kazan [Asamayama])

Framed: color on paper
259×182 cm.
The Museum of Modern Art, Kamakura

Mount Asama is a very active volcano on the border between Gunma and Nagano Prefectures. It has erupted fifty times in recorded history, the most famous eruption occurring in 1783 when the scenic Onioshidashi (Demon Pushed Rocks) formations were created by lava. Tamako, who is noted for her images in her paintings of volcanoes and the intentional distortion, depicts the mountain in dense, opaque paint. In reality a placid but steaming gray cone, the volcano is painted here hugely out of scale and in flaming colors. So violent are the movements and gaudy hot hues that the mountain appears as a demonic abstraction, overpowering the neatly rendered village and golden fields beneath.



164

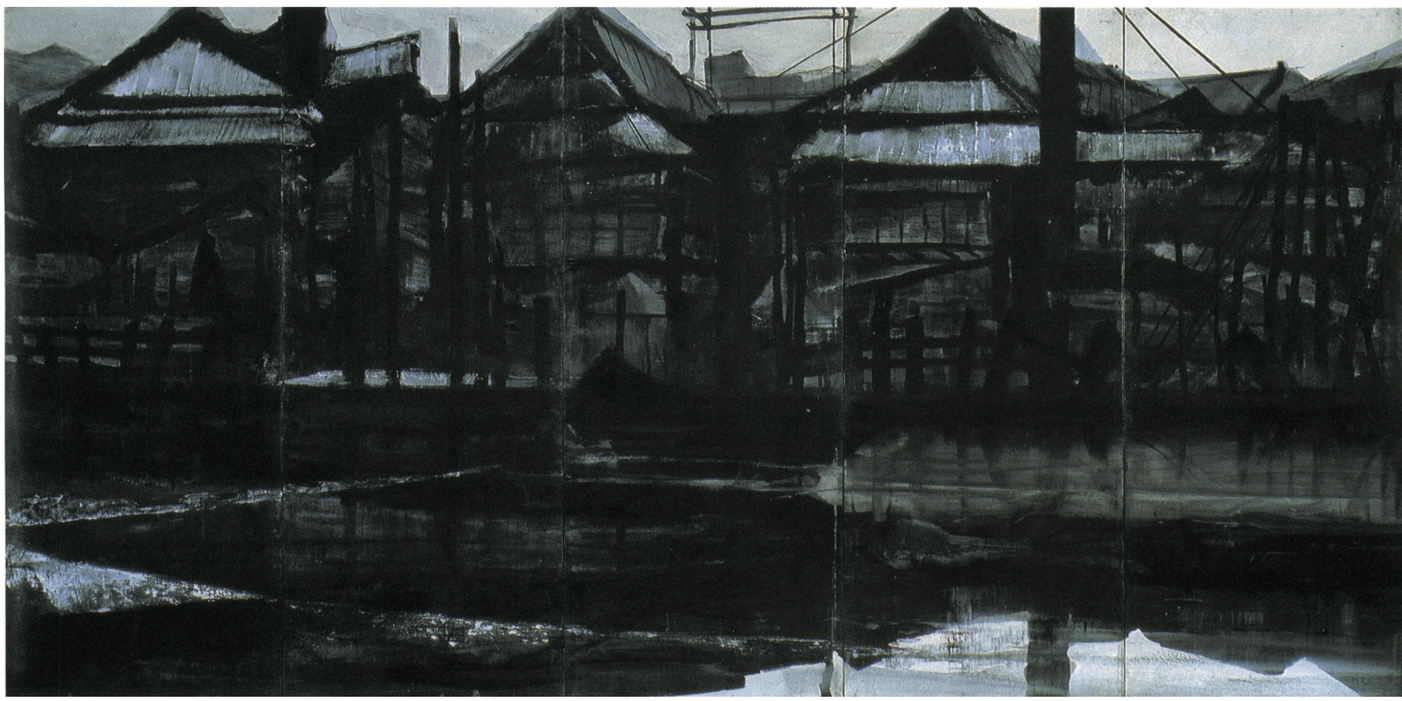
Yokoyama Misao, 1920–1973

Blast Furnace, 1956
(Yōkōro)

Panel in twelve sections: color on cotton
227.6×1092 cm.
Fukuoka Art Museum

Yokoyama established the inimitable style of his painting in his first solo show at the Matsuzakaya department store in the Ginza district of Tokyo in 1956. *Blast Furnace* was one of five large-scale works depicting different subjects presented in this exhibition. On his return from the war at the age of thirty, Yokoyama began working in charcoal and later gained a reputation for working in the richly dark, charred inks that dominate the surface of his paintings. In this work, the artist captures the soot, steam, and grit of ironworks aflush with the electric bright glow of red-hot metal. Often cited as emblematic of Japan's postwar recovery, *Blast Furnace* is more indicative of the artist's penchant for working in large scale and his innovative selection of non-traditional themes.





165

165

Yokoyama Misao, 1920–1973

River, 1956
(Kawa)

Panel in seven sections: color on cotton
226×630 cm.
Fukui Fine Arts Museum

In preparation for his first solo exhibition, Yokoyama is said to have measured the walls of the gallery at the Matsuzakaya department store to ensure the fit of his five large paintings. *River*, like the four other works on panel in his Matsuzakaya exhibition, was created by joining together *fusuma*, the double-sided, traditional, painting surfaces used as sliding doors. These panels, however, were never intended to be used as doors. Sharply presented against a twilight sky, geometric silhouettes of the riverfront are rendered as dense, dark reflections in silvery water. The uncommon gravity of the image is due as much to his somber style as to his expressive handling of homemade ink. Instead of costly traditional black ink, Yokoyama mixed big batches of furnace soot and glue.

166

Yokoyama Misao, 1920–1973

Wall Street, 1962
(Wōru-gai)

Framed: color on paper
271×136 cm.
The National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo

During his trip to New York in 1961, Yokoyama visited the financial district while it was raining. On returning to Tokyo, he painted *Wall Street* as great silvery slabs of reflecting glass and rain-slick concrete rising in shadowed flanks. Decorative silver foil is overlaid in black and drab grays, its ornamental character blunted in Yokoyama's hands by the insistent weight of murky ink and vague, indeterminate forms. The dark, expressive character of the painting makes it one of the finest images of postwar art.





166



Mountain Market Clear in Rising Mist

167

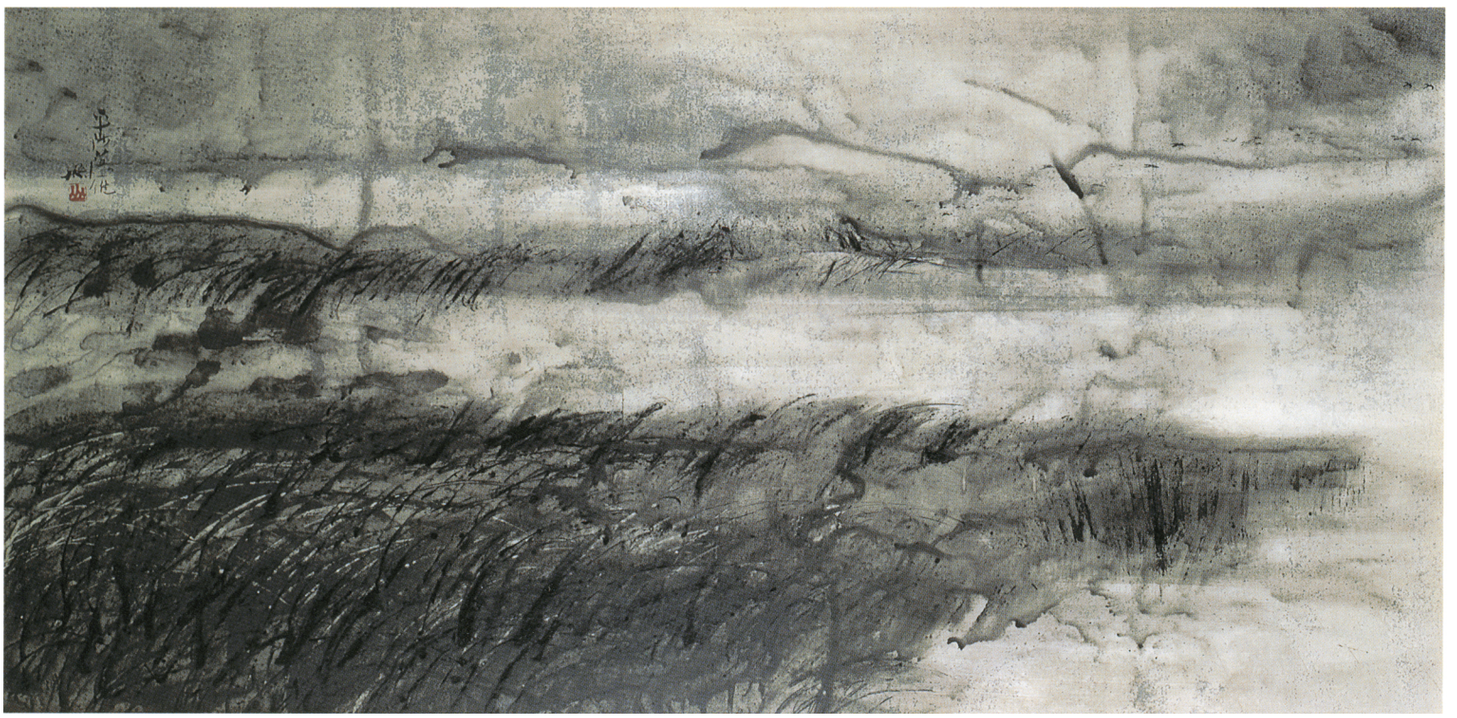
Yokoyama Misao, 1920–1973

Eight Views of the Xiao and Xiang Rivers: Mountain Market Clear in Rising Mist, Geese Descending on Sandbanks, 1963

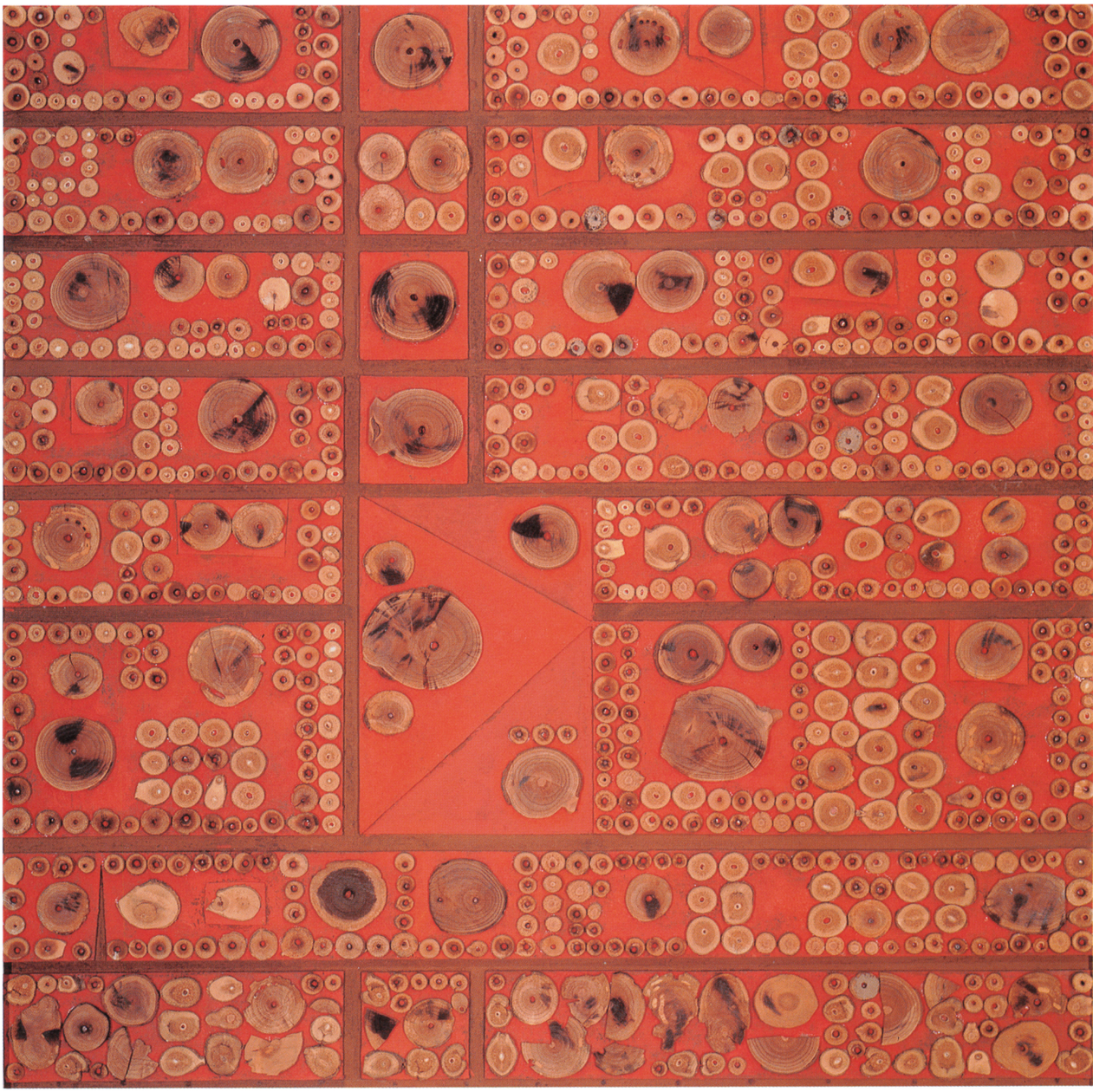
(Shōshō hakkei no uchi sanshi seiran, heisa rakugan)

Framed: ink on paper
121.4×242.8 cm. each
Mie Prefectural Art Museum

The *Eight Views of Xiao and Xiang Pivers* is the quintessential painting theme linking the landscape traditions of China and Japan. Since the twelfth century, artists of extraordinary stature have painted the *Eight Views*; during the modern period, masters who have rendered the theme to great critical acclaim include Imamura Shikō, Yokoyama Taikan, and Shimomura Kanzan. Yokoyama Misao's version is a technical and expressive *tour de force* utilizing extremely dark burnt inks mixed with thickened glues in a pooling technique. These visionary images of the *Xiao and Xiang* are of near-apocalyptic intensity and emanate an extraordinary power and mystery that distinguishes them from all other paintings on the theme.



Geese Descending on Sandbanks



168

Mikami Makoto, 1919–1972

Work 64, 5, 1964
(Sakuhin 64, 5)

Color on wood
94.7×95 cm.
Fukui Fine Arts Museum

In 1948, Mikami and several other young painters living in Kyoto founded the Panreal Art Association (Panriaru Bijutsu Kyōkai), an art study and exhibition group devoted to avant-garde art. *Work 64, 5* was produced during one of Mikami's most creative periods in the first half of the 1960s. The painting's asymmetrical grid of round and oval cross-sections forms irregular patterns on a visually hot, mineral-red ground. Abstract, three-dimensional, and made of non-traditional media, the painting challenges the definition of *Nihonga* as well as the distinctions between *Nihonga* and other modern art forms.



169

Shimomura Ryōnosuke, b.1923

Bird Acalanātha, 1965

(Tori fudō)

Framed: color on plasticine
185×235 cm.
The National Museum of Modern Art, Kyoto

Since the 1950s, birds have been a primary theme for Shimomura, whose later images grew increasingly more abstract and sculptural. The strangely ethereal character of this painting is derived directly from his bristling processions of skeletal, wraith-like birds and human figures. One of the founding members of the avant-garde Panreal Art Association, Shimomura created three-dimensional forms in paper mixed with glue and pigments in combination with ink and color. While several of his notable works have structural and thematic affinities to the Rinpa tradition, this work and its title refer to a Buddhist triptych representing the flame-haloed fury of the deity Fudō Myōō (*Acalanātha* or *Acala*, the Immovable One) and his flanking attendants Kongara (*Kimkara*) and Seitaka (*Cetaka*).



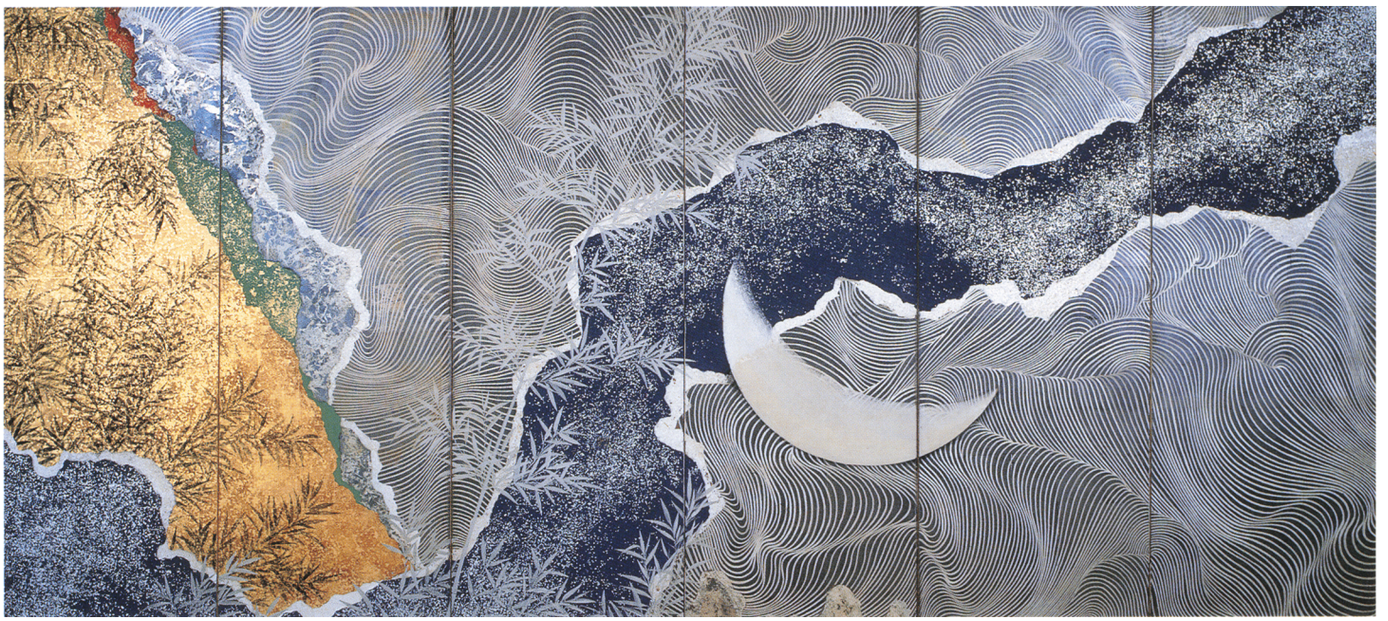
170

Hirayama Ikuo, b.1930

Establishing the Diamond Mind, 1963
(Konryū kongōshin zu)

Framed: color on paper
181.5×227.5 cm.
The National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo

Buddhist themes appear as an eclectic strain in contemporary *Nihonga,* and Hirayama is among its foremost artists. For nearly forty years, the artist has painted Buddhist tales, landscapes, and figures, of which *Establishing the Diamond Mind* is an early example. Here Hirayama illustrates a momentous nocturnal scene from the life of Buddha as he sits in meditation beneath the Bodhi tree. He is unmoved by the evil enticements and horrifying threats of Marā the Destroyer and his seductive daughters, who are depicted as griffins, a lion, and a temptress. Hardening his mind against all passion, illusion, and untruth, Buddha touches the ground, calling the Earth to witness his triumph over his enemies.



171

Kayama Matazō, b.1927

Star Festival, 1968
(Tanabata no hi)

Six-panel screen: color, ink, gold, and silver on silk
166.3×368.4 cm.
The Saint Louis Art Museum

The ancient festival of *Tanabata* celebrates the annual reunion of two ill-fated constellations, the celestial Herdsman and the Weaving Princess. Lost in their love, the stars neglected their duties of tending cows and weaving silk. As punishment, they were sent to distant parts of the galaxy, and were permitted to meet just once a lunar year, on the seventh night of the seventh month. Known for his vibrant patterns and moving compositions, Kayama is primary among postwar artists who have revived the decorative traditions by infusing stunningly ornate works with sensitive visual and poetic interpretations of cultural and literary themes. The placement of ragged-edged colors and textures on the screen recalls *tsugigami*, small, patched and decorated papers of various colors used for poetry in twelfth-century Japan.

Biographies

Biographies are arranged alphabetically by the artists' surnames. The preparation and editing of the biographies were overseen by Ellen P. Conant and Reiko Tomii. Japanese material was gathered by Harada Heisaku, Hirabayashi Akira, and Kobayashi Mioko. Compilers include: Ellen P. Conant, Brenda G. Jordan and Hiroshi Nara, Kojima Kaoru, Hiroko T. McDermott, Michiyo Morioka, Miriam Wattles, and Julia S. Yenne; their credits appear in full at the end of their entries. English translations of Japanese material were prepared by Cheryl Crowley, Beth Katzoff, Mariko Kawashima, Teresa Lai, David Lurie, Ted Mack, Sumiko Obata, Emi Shimokawa, Yasuko Tsuchikane, and Kasumi Yamashita.

Araki Kanpo, 1831–1915
荒木 寛畝



Araki Kanpo bridged late-Edo and early-Meiji painting, continuing the tradition which stemmed from Tani Bunchō (1763–1840), who established the style of *Nanboku gappa*, combining the Chinese *Beizonghua* and *Nanzongha* schools. Kanpo was born Tanaka Kōzaburō in Shiba Akabane in Edo (present-day Tokyo) in 1831. The Tanaka family had served for generations in administrative posts at the Zōjōji temple in Shiba. While still a child, Kanpo revealed a talent for painting, so in 1839 his father arranged for him to study with Araki Kankai (1789–1860), who was related to the chief priest of the Zōjōji. A follower of Bunchō and a master of *kachō-ga* (bird-and-flower painting), Kankai had already adopted Kan'ichi (1827–1893) as his first son; yet recognizing Kanpo's talent, he also adopted him in 1852.

Kan'ichi, who was then in the employment of the Kuroda family who ruled the Akizuki clan in Chikuzen (present-day Fukuoka Prefecture), recommended Kanpo to be retained as clan painter by Kuroda's nephew, Yamanouchi Yōdō, who governed Tosa (present-day Kōchi Prefecture). Following the Meiji Restoration and the abolition of the feudal system, Kanpo's career continued to thrive, and he received an award for his depiction of chrysanthemums at the Vienna Exposition in 1872.

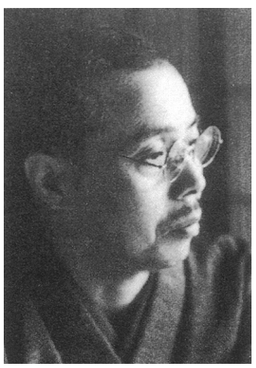
Before the Vienna Exposition, there was an exposition at Yushima Seidō, a former center for Confucian studies, in Tokyo. There Kanpo saw oil paintings which had been brought from abroad. Inspired by them, Kanpo began studying with Kawakami Tōgai (1827–1881) and Kunisawa Shinkurō (1847–1877), noted pioneer oil painters of the early Meiji period. Kanpo the oil painter became as accomplished and established as the two contemporary *yōga* masters, Takahashi Yuichi (1828–1894) and Goseda Hōryū (1827–1892). He was reportedly chosen for the honor of painting a portrait of the Empress Dowager.

Kanpo later returned to *Nihonga* and won the second/silver prize at the Tokyo-Prefecture Crafts Competitive Exhibition (*Tokyo-fu kōgei kyōshinkai*) in 1887. The following year, he was selected, with other respected painters of the time, to paint *Yellow Hollyhocks* (Kōshokuki) and *Grapes* (Budō) on the cedar doors for the new Imperial Palace (which, unfortunately, were later destroyed in a fire). He won the second prize with *Peacock* (Plate 25) at the third Domestic Industrial Exposition (*Naikoku kangyō hakurankai*) in 1890, and frequently won prizes at the exhibitions of the Japan Art Association (Nihon Bijutsu Kyōkai). Kanpo's work was also regularly sent to international expositions: he won awards at the Chicago World's Fair in 1893, the Paris Exposition in 1900, and the St. Louis World's Fair in 1904. After Hashimoto Gahō left the Tokyo School of Fine Arts (Tokyo Bijutsu Gakkō) in 1898, Kanpo was named professor of painting. He was made Imperial Household Artist (*Teishitsu gigeiin*) in 1900; he served as a judge at the Bunten from 1907 onwards.

Painters of Bunchō's school constituted a major force in the late Edo period. Bunchō himself advocated the ideal of "learning eight schools" (*hasshū kengaku*), declaring that he studied all extant painting schools including Kanō and Rinpa, *Yamato-e*, and *bunjin-ga*. He even studied Western painting by copying the paintings of birds and flowers brought from Holland. It was natural for Bunchō's followers, who aspired to realistic depiction of birds and flowers, to become interested in Western painting. Kanpo was among the artists who studied oil painting, in keeping with the school's interest in many painting styles. The main theme of Kanpo's paintings in the traditional medium was *kachō-ga*, notably peacocks and cocks, which he would render in ravishing color and brilliant technique. Bunchō's school was inherited by Kanpo's adopted son Jippo (1872–1944) and continued to assert a significant presence within the government-sponsored exhibitions.

(Kojima Kaoru)

Dōmoto Inshō, 1891–1975
堂本 印象



Dōmoto Inshō, with Fukuda Heihachirō, was considered one of Kyoto's top *Nihonga* painters of that generation, both before and after the Pacific War. The talents of these two men, however, diverged considerably. While Heihachirō was known for his decorative style, Inshō was much more controversial. Although he began his career as a painter of traditional subjects, ranging from genre to historical and religious themes, in the early postwar period he became the first *Nihonga* painter to experiment with the creation of abstract paintings.

Born and raised in Kyoto, Inshō was originally trained in craft design. He began his career by drawing patterns for traditional textiles. He pursued his studies as a *Nihonga* painter at the Kyoto Municipal Special School of Painting (Kyoto Shiritsu Kaiga Senmon Gakkō) between 1918 and 1924, and also took private lessons from Nishiyama Suishō (1879–1958), the influential pupil of Takeuchi Seihō.

A large painting on Buddhist themes which won an award in the 1925 Teiten exhibition was among his early works to win distinction and establish his reputation as a specialist in large-scale religious paintings. With this success, Inshō began to receive commissions to paint the ceilings and *fusuma* of distinguished Buddhist temples in the Kyoto and Osaka area. Inshō completed over 600 such commissions in his lifetime. His special proclivity for Buddhist subjects, which later developed into a more universal interest in Buddhism in general, was probably related to his simple, austere lifestyle. He made his paintings with a conviction in the deep importance of art, strengthened by faith.

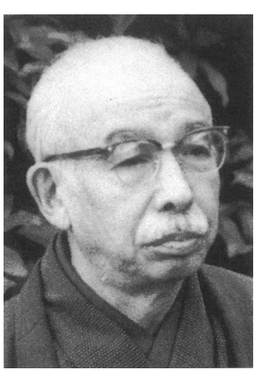
Inshō cultivated a strong interest in history, aesthetic theory, and Western art, from the Old Masters to Cubism and Kandinsky. These enthusiasms led him to successive transformations in style and subject matter during the postwar years. In 1952 Inshō went to Europe, as one of the first *Nihonga* painters to travel abroad after the war. His knowledge of early modern art helped him appreciate some of the postwar European experiments in art, which inspired his first abstract paintings in the 1950s (Figure 7.8). These works shook the *Nihonga* world; some praised his innovations, while others accused him of abandoning the traditional principles of *Nihonga*.

Inshō began to develop an international following during this time of his life. He had exhibitions in Turin, Paris, and New York, and his work was highly praised by Michel Tapié, the French critic and proponent of Art Informel. Concerning his nonobjective works, Inshō has said:

> There is no rule of art which prohibits me from painting abstractions in the *Nihonga* style. This is because beauty should be pursued as a universal entity commonly shared with the whole world. The community of *Nihonga* painters can no longer maintain their insular position.

Despite controversies, Inshō maintained a strong reputation in Japan and abroad until the end of his life. He was a respected teacher and benefactor; in 1967 he designed a museum to house his works. Toward the end of his life, Inshō began using representational elements again that he combined with abstractions in some of his works.

Fukuda Heihachirō, 1892–1974
福田 平八郎



Fukuda Heihachirō is foremost among those painters who, to the Japanese eye, were able to create an expression of authentic modernity within the parameters of *Nihonga*. An espousal of two principles, a close observation of nature and a study of Japanese pictorial traditions—in his case, the decorative legacy of Rinpa as exemplified by *Ripples*, 1932 and *Irises*, 1934 (Plates 120 and 109)—remain recurring elements in the work of many *Nihonga* painters. Heihachirō, however, brought these common practices to a new level of innovation and accessibility, winning the appreciation of discerning connoisseurs and the general public as well. A genius at turning the ordinary into the modern, he interpreted such mundane and ubiquitous objects as rooftops (Plate 154) and water through bold stylization and a remarkable sense of color.

When Heihachirō was born, his father worked for a pharmacist in Ōita, Kyūshū; six years later, his father opened his own stationery store. Heihachirō liked to draw from a very early age, but he was more interested in entering the naval academy than a painting school. In 1910, he decided to quit school, however, in only his third year of middle school, because he could not pass some of his classes. On the suggestion of a family friend, he took some classes at the adjunct course (*bekka*) of the Kyoto Municipal Special School of Painting (Kyoto Shiritsu Kaiga Senmon Gakkō). The following year, the Kyoto Municipal School of Arts and Crafts (Kyoto Shiritsu Bijutsu Kōgei Gakkō) accepted him as a full-time student. Since Heihachirō began his formal study of art at a municipal school rather than an individual painter's *juku*, he never acquired a professional artist name. His classmates had called him "Kyūshū," after the place of his birth, but when he graduated, Heihachirō decided to use his given name as his painter's name as well.

At the end of his first year, Heihachirō had won the silver medal in the school's annual exhibition, followed by three consecutive gold medals in his second, third, and fourth years. His graduation piece, *After the Rain* (Ugo) in 1915, also received high praise. In 1914, Heihachirō advanced to the Kyoto Municipal Special School of Painting, studying with such famous artists as Takeuchi Seihō, Yamamoto Shunkyo, and Kikuchi Keigetsu. Since students at the Special School of Painting were expected to submit their works to the annual Bunten, Heihachirō sent a painting every year, but his work was rejected in 1916, 1917, and 1918.

Heihachirō graduated from the Special School of Painting in 1918, an important year in the art world. The last Bunten was held in that year, before it was reformed and renamed Teiten. The year 1918 also saw the founding of the Association for the Creation of National Painting (Kokuga Sōsaku Kyōkai), whose first exhibition opened both in Tokyo and Kyoto to great critical acclaim. In this atmosphere of change, Heihachirō finally began to have some success in the national competitions. His *Snow* (Yuki), in which the artist born in the southern part of the country captured the subject's coolness and purity with great fascination and sensitivity, was accepted by the first Teiten in 1919. From then on, Heihachirō regularly exhibited at the government-sponsored exhibitions and frequently won awards. In 1924, he was invited to become assistant professor at the Special School of Painting and appointed a judge of the fifth Teiten, firmly establishing his place in the art world.

In 1928, Heihachirō travelled to China for a month. He visited Shanghai, Suzhou, Hangzhou, and Dairen. He was particularly impressed by the natural beauty of the Chinese scenery and the kind of affinity that the Chinese people seemed to have with animals and birds. His journey seems to have given him a fresh appreciation of the beauty of nature.

In 1930, Heihachirō and seven others banded together to form the Rokuchō-kai study group. The group included the *Nihonga* painters Nakamura Gakuryō (1890–1969) and Yamaguchi Hōshun; the *yōga* painters Makino Torao (1890–1946), Nakagawa Kigen (1892–1972), and Kimura Shōhachi (1893–1958); and the art critics Togari Soshin'an (1893–1944) and Yokokawa Kiichirō (1895–1973). Because of the varying specialities among them, the group's main goal was the friendly exchange of ideas. Heihachirō himself was able to glean valuable information from his *yōga* colleagues on foreign materials and techniques.

Toward the end of the 1920s and during the 1930s, Heihachirō's work became increasingly decorative, with the forms boldly simplified and the space extremely flattened, as best exemplified by *Ripples*, 1932 and *Irises*, 1934. *Ripples*, especially, incited a great deal of controversy among critics for the way in which the artist ingeniously transformed the image based on close observation into an innovative decorative vision. Heihachirō kept active during the war years, although he resigned from his teaching positions in 1937 due to illness. His work after the war attained a greater sophistication, incorporating a quiet but penetrating vision of nature into his intellectual, modernist compositions. He also continued to collect honors, beginning with the judgeship of the Nitten in 1946, a membership in the Japan Arts Academy (Nihon Geijutsu-in) in 1947, the prestigious Mainichi Art Prize (*Mainichi bijutsu shō*) in 1949, and the Order of Cultural Merit (*Bunka kunshō*) in 1961. In 1968, Heihachirō received a commission to paint bamboos for the Bamboo Room of the new Imperial Palace.

Fukuda Toyoshirō, 1904–1970
福田 豊四郎

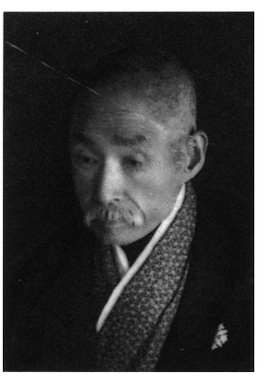


Born to a pharmacist in a small mining town in northern Akita Prefecture, Fukuda Toyoshirō moved to Kyoto in 1919. There he apprenticed with the *yōga* painter Kanokogi Takeshirō (1874–1941), who had studied in Paris and painted in a late-nineteenth-century academic style. Two years later, Toyoshirō moved to Tokyo where he worked with Kawabata Ryūshi and began his formal study of *Nihonga*. Returning to Kyoto in 1923, Toyoshirō moved on to study with Tsuchida Bakusen and show at the exhibitions of the Association for the Creation of National Painting (Kokuga Sōsaku Kyōkai), which Bakusen and others had founded in 1918. After he completed the four-year course at the Kyoto Municipal Special School of Painting (Kyoto Shiritsu Kaiga Senmon Gakkō) in 1928—the same year that the Association's *Nihonga* division was disbanded—Toyoshirō resumed his association with Ryūshi in Tokyo. Under Ryūshi's influence, Toyoshirō began to incorporate decorative elements into his naturalistic style, eventually moving toward a more abstract manner.

In 1933 Toyoshirō was expelled from Ryūshi's Seiryū-sha, partly because he continued to exhibit in the Teiten while maintaining his association with the anti-government Seiryū-sha. By this time, Toyoshirō found kindred spirits in Komatsu Hitoshi (1902–1989) and Yoshioka Kenji (1906–1990), two innovative painters in their twenties, who, along with Toyoshirō, won top awards at the eleventh Teiten in 1930. As their friendship grew, their circle began to encompass progressive *yōga* painters and literary scholars. Exposed to such modernist movements as Fauvism and Surrealism, their work went through great metamorphoses. From then on, Toyoshirō's career was intimately intertwined with the succession of art organizations that sought to infuse new ideas into *Nihonga*. In 1934, the three formed Sanju-sha, which was eventually absorbed by the New *Nihonga* Study Group (Shin-Nihonga Kenkyūkai) established later that year by Toyoshirō, Yoshioka, Iwahashi Eien, and others. The Study Group, in turn, was reorganized as the Association for New Artists (Shin-Bijutsu-jin Kyōkai) in 1938. After World War II, Toyoshirō, along with Yamamoto Kyūjin, Yoshioka Kenji, and others founded the group Creative Art (Sōzō Bijutsu), in order to "create Japanese painting based on world relevance."

Toyoshirō placed greater emphasis on the importance of nature and the relationship of the ephemerality of art to the transcendence of nature. He devoted himself to painting the natural beauty of his hometown in Akita, recording the day-to-day activities of the people of that region. Even as his work became more abstract, he sought to depict the fusion of humanity with nature. This revelation of personal roots in his paintings may have been on his mind when he commented after an exhibition of Indian art in 1952: "There are vital elements that inevitably surface, emerging due to one's ethnicity.... Ultimately, your fundamental weapon as an artist lies in your ethnicity."

Hashimoto Gahō, 1835–1908
橋本 雅邦



Even though Hashimoto Gahō was among the most famous artists of Japan in his lifetime, in today's *Nihonga* canon he is outshone by his friend and rival, Kanō Hōgai. Although the role Gahō played in shaping the aesthetics for a new type of painting called *Nihonga* was obvious to his contemporaries and following generations, it has been obscured by the published verbosity of Okakura Tenshin. Yet Gahō played at least as important a role as Tenshin in developing and implementing the philosophy of *Nihonga*. As head teacher of the Tokyo School of Fine Arts (Tokyo Bijutsu Gakkō) for nine years and then as leader in the exhibition and study groups associated with the Japan Art Institute (Nihon Bijutsu-in), Gahō bore the burden and responsibility of the new movement, especially in the last years of Meiji when

Tenshin was spending much of his time abroad.

Gahō's father, born to a rice merchant, was adopted by the Kobiki-chō Kanō family through his marriage to their eldest daughter. Since the age of seven, Gahō had studied painting with his father who served as the official painter for the Kawagoe clan; at age eleven, Gahō went to study with Kanō Shōsen'in Tadanobu (1823–1880), the head of the Kobiki-chō school. It was there that Gahō first became associated with Kanō Hōgai, who was seven years his senior. Under Shōsen'in, Gahō quickly ascended the ranks of apprenticeship and by the time he was 22, he had succeeded Hōgai as chief assistant.

Although he completed his study with excellent credentials from the Kobiki-chō school, the only work that Gahō could find after the Meiji Restoration was painting *sumi-e* export fans and carving bridges for *shamisen*, the traditional three-stringed musical instrument. In addition to financial difficulties, personal tragedies struck when his wife became mentally ill as a result of the chaos of the revolution in 1867 (she died later in 1879). The family lost all its belongings in the fire at the Shōsen'in estate in 1870. Finally, some luck came when Gahō got a position drafting maps at the Naval School in 1871. Although he was now financially secure, Gahō still despaired of ever supporting his family as an artist, but he continued his study of painting. He briefly experimented with Western oil painting, like many traditional artists at the time, and began a serious study of Japanese classics.

In 1884, the ambitions of the two Kanō artists Hōgai and Gahō became entangled with the ideals of two theorists, Ernest Fenollosa and Okakura Tenshin. The resulting alliance of personalities, abilities, and political forces became the nucleus of what was to be called the New Faction (*Shinpa*) movement in Tokyo. The four united with art dealers and government officials to form the Kanga-kai. Beginning in 1885 the group was dedicated to the promotion of a "new" style of Japanese painting. Government connections enabled the four to become involved with the planning of the new government art academy, the Tokyo School of Fine Arts (Tokyo Bijutsu Gakkō), which opened in 1889. Hōgai was originally slated to become head teacher at the new school; however, due to his untimely death in 1888, Gahō became the obvious next choice. Here, Gahō came into his own, both as an artist and as a teacher.

Gahō's most masterful paintings were done during his years at the school. Best known for his landscapes, Gahō was able to make the transition from the traditional *sansui* (literally, mountains and water) to *fūkei* (landscape) through his attention to light. During his lifetime, his landscapes as well as his works in other genres enjoyed great popularity and reportedly commanded prices comparable to past masters. At the fourth Domestic Industrial Exposition (*Naikoku kangyō hakurankai*), one of his works from 1895 won first prize: *Shakyamuni and Sixteen Arhats* (Shaka jūroku rakan zu). It captured the spirit of the age with their spirited color which wholly transformed traditional motifs. His works also earned him international fame: he won the silver prize at the Paris Exposition in 1900 and the top prize at the St. Louis World's Fair in 1904.

Gahō's strong views about art education, certainly a reaction to his rigid Kanō training, were reflected in his teaching at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts, where he taught *Nihonga* along with such influential educators as Kawabata Gyokushō and Kose Shōseki (1843–1919). His students included the future leaders of the next generation of *Nihonga* painters including Yokoyama Taikan, Shimomura Kanzan, and Hishida Shunsō. Although Tenshin was largely responsible for developing the curriculum, Gahō was in charge of two of the most important classes: *rinmo* (copying) and *shin'an* (new conception). In the *rinmo* class, he encouraged the direct copying of masterworks rather than working with dry modelbooks (*funpon*) as he himself had had to do. In the *shin'an* class, which students did not take until their last year, he guided his students to create compositions of their own, urging them to make use of new ideas in their work.

Gahō was generally quite taciturn, although he could be voluble when drunk; his words of guidance had a great impact on his students. When he approved of a painting, he would utter a mere "all right" (*kekkō*). In expounding on *Nihonga* aesthetics, besides talking about the greatness of Sesshū, Sesson, and Song and Yuan paintings, Gahō often stressed the importance of *kokoromochi* (feeling) over form. He believed that the scale of a painting should go beyond its size and said things like "it is not only what's on the surface that matters; so that one never tires of it, there must be depth in a painting." Gahō was called poetic and Zen-like. His aesthetic use of *kokoromochi* became a critical element in the vocabulary of Taishō romanticism.

When Tenshin had to resign from the Tokyo School of Fine Arts in 1898, Gahō followed him and became the head of Tenshin's new organization, the Japan Art Institute (Nihon Bijutsu-in). However, Gahō did not join the core Institute members when they relocated to Izura in 1906. By that time, Gahō had his own means of financial support. The citizens of Kawagoe, where his father had been the official painter for the clan, formed a group of supporters for Gahō in 1897, and the Futaba-kai, formed by his students including Shimomura Kanzan and Kawai Gyokudō in 1903, provided him with additional income. Although he no longer headed the Institute after 1907, Gahō continued to advocate the "new" *Nihonga* and remained personally loyal to Tenshin.

During his last days in the hospital where he was suffering from the final stages of stomach cancer, Gahō said to Tenshin: "I'm not afraid of death at all; I can die calmly. I'm only worried about the future of *Nihonga*, hoping that it can show its intrinsic value to the world." Besides *kokoromochi*, Gahō valued *seijō* (purity), *muga* (selflessness), and *ganchiku* (hidden significance) in painting—characteristics which he could be said to have held within himself.

(Miriam Wattles)

Hashimoto Kansetsu, 1883–1945
橋本 関雪



Hashimoto Kansetsu's lifelong fascination with China and the tradition of literati painting was coupled with his artistic roots in the Shijō school. Kansetsu grew up in Kobe in an atmosphere ripe with artistic influences. His grandfather had been a celebrated *haiku* poet. His father Kaikan was an accomplished painter, poet, and scholar of Chinese classics who served as the official Confucian scholar for the former Akashi clan. His mother Fuji was an amateur painter. Kansetsu's childhood home was the site of many artistic gatherings, including visits from Chinese artist friends of his father who were seeking refuge from the unstable situation in China at the time. Kaikan gave Kansetsu a substantial introduction to classical Chinese literature and he had direct exposure to Chinese painting practices as a result of his contacts.

As Kansetsu's early literary education was guided by his father, so was his artistic training. In 1895, Kansetsu began to study painting with Kataoka Kōkō, a Shijō-school painter and Kaikan's friend. Not much is known about Kōkō, except that he was the student of Okajima Seikō (1828–1877), who in turn had studied with the renowned

Kyoto master Yokoyama Seiki (1793–1865). In 1903 Kansetsu entered Takeuchi Seihō's *juku*, Chikujō-kai. Seihō had just returned from Europe and was avidly experimenting with Western techniques and attracting attention in Kyoto. Kansetsu and his fellow pupils, most notably Ono Chikkyō and Tsuchida Bakusen, were at the center of a new movement led by Seihō in the Kyoto Painting Circle (*Kyoto gadan*). Along with the use of a strong diagonal composition, pale colors, and a visually descriptive line associated with the Shijō school, some of Kansetsu's paintings, especially those of animals, show distinct similarities to Seihō's later style in their fluid outlines, liberal use of wash, and spontaneous brushwork.

However important his study with Seihō may have been, stories about Kansetsu's contentious relationship with Seihō appear frequently in biographies of Kansetsu. While Seihō initially supported the selection of Kansetsu's work to the government-sponsored exhibitions beginning in the second Bunten in 1908, Seihō was known to have been very critical of Kansetsu. In 1923, Kansetsu left Seihō's Chikujō-kai, leaving the discord between them a subject of much speculation.

Along with the influence of contemporary movements in Kyoto, Kansetsu's interest in China continued to mold his artistic outlook. A six-month sojourn in Manchuria in 1905 as an illustrator for the army during the Russo-Japanese War was the first of his many trips to the continent. After 1913, he returned to China almost every year. Three Chinese literati artists of the Qing dynasty—Jin Nong (1687–c.1764), Daoji (1642–1707), and Zhu Da (1624–1705)—were his primary Chinese artistic inspirations. He visited each of their birthplaces, amassed biographical information about them, and collected their paintings. Kansetsu's paintings show a profound knowledge of Chinese literature in his choice of subject matter, his techniques, and the realistic features of the Chinese landscape and people observed during his many trips.

Kansetsu travelled to Europe in his later years, building his collection of European art and his knowledge of Western techniques, which occasionally surface in his paintings. However, he is primarily remembered for his fusion of literati and Shijō styles. One of the defining features of the Shijō school is its link to famed *nanga* artist Yosa no Buson (1716–1783) through Goshun (1752–1811). The combination of styles in Kansetsu's work may have been facilitated by this stylistic connection. The fact that Kansetsu went to the source of literati painting in China and had a vast collection of Chinese paintings at his disposal accounts for the unique character of Chinese elements incorporated in his paintings.

(Julia S. Yenne)

Hayami Gyoshū, 1894–1935
速水 御舟



"Throughout his life, [Hayami Gyoshū] devoted himself to a search for an innovative form in *Nihonga*," eulogized Yasuda Yukihiko after the painter's premature death. "Standing firmly on his pursuit of the truth, without hesitation, he often destroyed what he had accomplished up to then, in order to create the new. He never neglected to learn from the ancient to get an ideal vision of new *Nihonga*."

Gyoshū was born the second son of the Makita family who ran a pawn shop in Asakusa, Tokyo. When he was eleven, Gyoshū studied lacquer (*maki-e*) in his neighborhood. Since Matsumoto Fūko (1840–1923), the *Nihonga* master who specialized in history painting, operated his *juku*, Angadō, near the Makita residence, Gyoshū knew Fūko from his childhood; after finishing elementary school in 1908, Gyoshū became Fūko's student. At Angadō, following the customary regimen of traditional training in painting, Gyoshū copied the copies (*funpon*) of Heian and Kamakura handscrolls, Chinese painting, and the works of various schools including Kanō and Tosa. There Gyoshū met Imamura Shikō, who would greatly influence him later, as well as Ushida Keison (1890–1976), Koyama Taigetsu (1891–1946), and Omoda Seiju (1891–1933). It was a very stimulating environment in which Gyoshū sought advice from his fellow pupils: Seiju cautioned him that he idealized his subject too much, urging him to see not only its beauty but also its ugliness. Nakajima Kōson, his senior, stressed the importance of *shasei*, or sketching from life, emphasizing that one should paint only by actually looking at subjects from life.

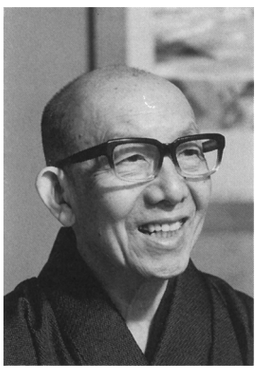
In 1909, Gyoshū received from Fūko his artist name "Kako." He would use that until 1912 when he changed it to "Kōnen." In 1911, upon Shikō's introduction, Gyoshū joined Kōji-kai, where he met Kobayashi Kokei. In 1913, the art patron Hara Sankei saw Gyoshū's work which the young artist had reworked after having been rejected by the Bunten the previous year, and decided to give him financial support. After Kōji-kai disbanded later that year, Gyoshū moved to Kyoto with Keison and Seiju. In January 1914, the artist began to use "Hayami," the surname of his mother's family into which he had been adopted, coupled with the artist name "Gyoshū."

In August 1914, Gyoshū returned to Tokyo upon learning about the reorganization of the Japan Art Institute (Nihon Bijutsu-in). He moved into quarters in Meguro with Shikō, Keison, Seiju, and others. The work Gyoshū exhibited at the first exhibition of the reorganized Institute was in general very reminiscent of the Post-Impressionists, although his brilliant coloration revealed an undeniable influence by Shikō. Gyoshū, Keison, Seiju, and others formed the group Sekiyō-kai under the leadership of Shikō. In February 1915, they held the group's first exhibition outdoors in the garden of the Yoshida estate near their living quarters (Yoshida Kōzaburō later became Gyoshū's brother-in-law). The exhibition, modeled after the French independent exhibitions, earned them notoriety as the "Meguro school," but their avant-garde activities were cut short by the untimely death of Shikō in 1916.

Shikō's death prompted Gyoshū to move beyond Shikō's shadow and strive to develop his own style. In 1917, *Six Scenes Outside Kyoto* (Rakugai roku-dai), which he painted after he returned to Kyoto, was exhibited at the fourth exhibition of the Institute, winning him high praise and a full membership in the Institute. The following year, Gyoshū created the magnificent blue-green landscape, *Shūgakuin Village in North Kyoto* (Plate 116). While what he himself called his "addiction to *gunjō* (blue-green)" ended with *Mount Hiei* (Hieizan) the next year, *Shūgakuin Village* definitely signalled a shift toward his so-called "minute realism" period. *Autumn Eggplants and Black Teabowl* and *Teacup and Fruit* (Plates 104 and 105), both from 1921, demonstrate Gyoshū's efforts to push the representational limit of the *Nihonga* medium. The similarity between Gyoshū's realism and that of the contemporary *yōga* painter Kishida Ryūsei (1891–1929) has been pointed out.

After 1924, Gyoshū endeavored to outgrow the limitations of his realism and achieved a stylized beauty with *Dancing Flames* (Enbu), 1925. He entered the Shōwa period by experimenting with simplified forms as in *House in Kyoto, House in Nara* (Kyō no ie, Nara no ie), 1927. In 1930, Gyoshū visited European countries on the occasion of a Japanese art exhibition in Rome; after his return, he painted *Women: Two Themes* (Onna ni-dai), 1931, in which he explored the movements of human bodies. In 1933, he was invited to Korea as an exhibition judge; the trip resulted in some of his paintings incorporating Korean genre themes. In 1935, Gyoshū died of typhoid at the early age of 42.

Higashiyama Kaii, b.1908
東山 魁夷



© Tanuma Takeyoshi

Higashiyama Kaii has long retained his reputation as an important landscape painter in the *Nihonga* tradition. A large and faithful public continues to admire and collect his works. For him, travel has provided the main focus of his artistic life. "The end of one journey is the beginning of another," he has noted, "and as long as I live I will continue to move from journey to journey." In terms of subject matter, at least, the artist reflects this desire to find meaning in nature from his trips all over Japan and abroad.

Born in Yokohama in 1908, Higashiyama Kaii was brought up in the port city of Kobe. He showed a precocious talent in drawing as a child, and as a youth made sketching trips to nearby Kyoto and Nara. In 1926, he moved to Tokyo in order to study *Nihonga* at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts (Tokyo Bijutsu Gakkō), where he eventually worked with Yūki Somei (1875–1957). Somei, perhaps echoing the words of the sculptor and critic Takamura Kōtarō, whose 1910 essay "The Green Sun" influenced a whole generation of artists, told him that any artist must leave his personal imprint on his work. "Even if things are green," the artist remembers being told, "when you feel that it is red, you paint it red." His signature style, with its deep blue and green tonalities and simplifications of natural forms, might have stemmed from that early encouragement to seek his own vision.

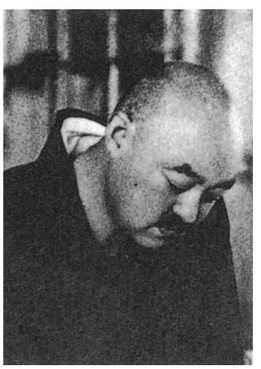
The artist made his first trip to Europe in 1933, when he was given a scholarship by the German Government to study aesthetics and art history at the University of Berlin. His experiences there gave him a sense of the solemnity of German art, an attribute he strove to include in the development of his own emerging ideals for *Nihonga* painting.

In the postwar period, he has continued his travels to Europe, China, and elsewhere. The artist asserts that he has found a certain commonality in nature everywhere, and so strives to study what he calls the heart of each country's natural surroundings in order to gain a broader understanding of human nature.

During the course of his long career, Higashiyama Kaii has received a number of important commissions. In 1968, he created murals for the new Imperial Palace in Tokyo; in 1971, he was invited to paint *fusuma* murals for the Tōshōdaiji, an important Buddhist temple in the outskirts of Nara. The Japanese government commissioned a painting in 1972 to be presented to Mao Zedong, to celebrate the normalization of Sino-Japanese relations.

Many of his admirers find in his pictures both objective and personal elements which, for the artist, represent the reflections of his travel experiences. "These mountains are not real mountains," he has said, "but mountains that are burned into my heart."

Hirafuku Hyakusui, 1877–1933
平福 百穂



Lauded by Kaburaki Kiyokata as "one of the pillars of the new *Nihonga*," Hirafuku Hyakusui was one of the Taishō *Nihonga* artists to achieve an individual style by combining Western and Japanese techniques. A visually and emotionally "truthful" portrayal of nature was his self-professed goal. He experimented with different ways of depicting visual reality and incorporated techniques long practiced in Japan such as Rinpa and *nanga*. Taking advantage of a network of connections forged by his father, Hirafuku Suian (1844–1890), and building his own academic and journalistic contacts, Hyakusui rose to a position of influence in Tokyo's artistic groups and institutions, which offered a stage for his artistic explorations.

Hyakusui's youth was spent in Akita in an environment conducive to becoming an artist. He was surrounded by his father Suian's copybooks and painting supplies, and painting parties were frequent. Only after his father's death in 1890, when Hyakusui was thirteen, did the boy begin serious artistic training. His siblings had already begun work in other professions, and it was decided that Hyakusui, the fourth child, should continue the tradition begun by his grandfather and carried on by his father. His father's patron had been Segawa Angorō, a prosperous businessman, who now channelled his support to Hyakusui. The young man also received encouragement from Suzuki Hyakunen (1825–1891), a former teacher of Suian who attended the Suian memorial exhibit held in Akita a year after his death. When Hyakusui finally decided to become an artist, Suian's student Tsuji Kukō helped him get started.

A broad network of contacts was instrumental in Hyakusui's career. Financial backing from Segawa allowed Hyakusui to go to Tokyo in 1894 to pursue his training with Kawabata Gyokushō, a former associate of Suian. He then studied at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts (Tokyo Bijutsu Gakkō) in 1897–1899. Taguchi Kikutei (1875–1943), a fellow Akitan best known as an art critic and founder-editor of the journal *Chūō bijutsu* (Central Art), provided the introduction for Hyakusui's first job as an illustrator with the journal *Shinsei* (New Voice) in 1901. Until the late Meiji period, Hyakusui worked for many journals and influential newspapers including *Kokumin shinbun* (People's Newspaper) where he covered legislative sessions of the Diet. He also formed lasting friendships with Tokutomi Sohō (1863–1957), the founder of *Kokumin shinbun*, and many artists, including Kaburaki Kiyokata and Kawabata Ryūshi, with whom he worked at *Tegami zasshi* (Correspondence Magazine) and *Kokumin shinbun*, respectively. Beyond making connections in the Tokyo art world, working as an illustrator helped Hyakusui develop a greater facility for portraying emotional realism, sketching "from the inside out," as noted by his contemporary Yūki Somei (1875–1957).

Hyakusui's involvement in artistic societies grew out of his associations with his artist colleagues and his participation in journalistic circles. In 1900, in opposition to the Japan Art Institute (Nihon Bijutsu-in), Hyakusui, along with other former students from Gyokushō's *juku*, Somei and Fukui Kōtei (1865–1938), established Musei-kai (literally, Voiceless Society), which became known for bold experimental works that incorporated *yōga* with *Nihonga*. Around this time, Hyakusui was studying Western-style drawing at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts and at the Pacific Painting Society's Institute (Taiheiyō Gakai Kenkyūjo). In 1916, with the encouragement of Taguchi Kikutei, Kinrei-sha was organized in 1916 by Somei, Hyakusui, Kiyokata, Matsuoka Eikyū (1881–1938), and Kikkawa Reika (1875–1929) to give experimental *Nihonga* artists a place to show their work. During the 1910s, Hyakusui had begun experimenting with a variety of painting techniques, such as *tarashikomi* associated with Rinpa, and the emotionally expressive application of *sumi*

from *nanga*. In 1902 he joined Araragi, an innovative group of traditional *waka* poets who emphasized direct observation of nature and study of the eighth-century *Man'yō-shū* anthology. He published his poetry as well as his illustrations, in the company of such distinguished poets as Itō Sachio (1864–1913), Nagatsuka Takashi (1879–1915), and Saitō Mokichi (1882–1953).

Hyakusui went on to become a senior statesman in the art world. He combined artistic vision with political involvement, setting a precedent for the lifestyle of the modern Japanese artist. Beginning in the 1920s, Hyakusui served as a judge at the government-sponsored exhibitions, the Bunten and later the Teiten; he was named a member of the Imperial Academy of Fine Arts (Teikoku Bijutsu-in) in 1930. In 1932, a year before his death, he was appointed a professor at his alma mater, the Tokyo School of Fine Arts.

(Julia S. Yenne)

Hirayama Ikuo, b.1930
平山 郁夫



A victim of the bombing of Hiroshima, Hirayama Ikuo has found his solace and inspiration in Buddhism and his consolation and expression of his feelings in the world of art. His work has been said to inspire peace rather than emotions of war and turbulence, reflecting perhaps the experiences of his youth and the continued effect of Buddhism in his work.

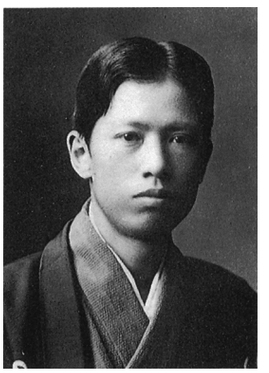
In the aftermath of World War II, Hirayama chose to enter an art school rather than a regular high school, and began to study *Nihonga* at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts (Tokyo Bijutsu Gakkō) in 1947 (the school was reorganized as the Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music [Tokyo Geijutsu Daigaku] in 1949). While at the school, he was introduced to works by a number of contemporary European artists, but Hirayama attributes his preference for Japanese art to his teachers, especially Maeda Seison. He was also exposed to different artistic trends through art magazines and exhibitions.

After graduating in 1952, Hirayama became an assistant of the *Nihonga* department at the University and began to participate in the exhibitions of the Japan Art Institute (Nihon Bijutsu-in). Shortly thereafter Hirayama soon began to suffer from radiation sickness and had terrible nightmares. He sought consolation in art, and then in 1959 created *Introduction of Buddhism* (Bukkyō denrai), the first of his many works based on Buddhist themes. A study of the history and philosophy of Buddhism reinvigorated the artist; Hirayama himself has later stated that his search for a new theme in his painting was inspired by his spiritual refreshment from Buddhism. By 1964, when he was made a full member of the Institute, he was well established in the *Nihonga* world.

After Hirayama was accorded a full professorship of *Nihonga* at his alma mater in 1973, he travelled abroad almost every year. In pursuit of his Buddhist study, in particular, his interest in how the religion was introduced to Japan, Hirayama visited China and central Asia (India, Pakistan, and Tibet), as well as the Near and Middle East, tracing back the path through which Buddhism was disseminated along the central Asian silk routes, or the Silk Road as the Japanese customarily called it.

Over the years, Hirayama has produced many landscapes of the Silk Road. These paintings and others inspired by his travels have been exhibited widely, from Tehrān and Istanbul to China and Japan. In 1967, he assisted his teacher Seison, who was working on the project to produce life-size replicas of the Hōryūji murals that were destroyed by fire in 1949. In 1973–1974, he joined a team that copied the murals of the Takamatsuzuka tumulus which had been discovered in 1972. As a head of the University's research team, he has been instrumental in the preservation of the art of Dunhuang in China since 1982. Hirayama is currently the president of the Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music.

Hishida Shunsō, 1874–1911
菱田 春草



In 1910, Hishida Shunsō, then age 35, gave this prediction of the future of *Nihonga* to a newspaper journalist:

> I firmly believe that the day will come—of course not in the near future—when all the painting we know today by the different names of *yōga*, watercolor, and *Nihonga* will be regarded as *Nihonga*, that is, painting conceived and produced by Japanese people. There will be no difference between what we call *Nihonga* and *yōga*, except on one point: their different painting materials.

Today, these genres are very close indeed. But the term *Nihonga* is still used to refer to paintings made principally with traditional Japanese materials.

Shunsō's own paintings testify to the great contribution that he made to the theory and practice of twentieth-century *Nihonga*. As a consequence of his continuing study of Japanese and Chinese old masters, his art transcended the conventional synthesis of opposites—Japan and the West, old and new—which had been advocated as the national agenda in art circles. Unlike many other *Nihonga* painters, Shunsō was motivated less by feeling than by reason. Logically conceived and composed, his work eventually attained a contemplative tranquillity enlivened by the observation of nature and a decorative effect. His life, however, ended at the tragically early age of 37, when he was at the peak of his creative powers.

Shunsō's work evolved with the early years of the Tokyo School of Fine Arts (Tokyo Bijutsu Gakkō) and the Japan Art Institute (Nihon Bijutsu-in). An early graduate of this government school for traditional art, his career took shape within art institutions rather than under the tutelage of an individual teacher or patron. His family boasted of no particular artistic heritage, just as his native town of Iida in the southern part of present-day Nagano Prefecture, had no distinctive tradition of artistic or literati culture. To find support for his art, Shunsō had to prove himself

through institutional affiliations and public exhibitions. In this sense, his life encapsulates some of the radically new challenges and opportunities which confronted Japanese painters of the modern period.

Shunsō's talent might have been neglected but for the new Meiji government's educational system. A painter later noted for his *yōga*, Nakamura Fusetsu (1866–1943), briefly taught a watercolor class at Shunsō's middle school and encouraged the boy to pursue an art education in Tokyo. In 1888, Shunsō travelled for four days by foot, ricksha, and train to join his brother Tamekichi, already a student at the Tokyo College of Physics. One of his two brothers who became physicists, Tamekichi had also recognized Shunsō's talent and remained his supporter throughout his life.

The first decade of Shunsō's career followed a course he wished. Graduating from the Tokyo School of Fine Arts in 1895 in its advanced painting course, he was then employed by the Imperial Museum to make copies of masterpieces in temples in the Kyoto and Nara area. His own paintings began to be shown publicly. For two years, he taught at his alma mater, until its director Okakura Tenshin was forced to resign in March 1898. Along with his lifelong colleagues Yokoyama Taikan and Shimomura Kanzan, Shunsō left the school and joined Tenshin in founding the Japan Art Institute. For the rest of his life, it was Tenshin's views and advice on painting that he most respected; and Tenshin understood his paintings better than anyone else. The year 1898 also marked a major change in his personal life with his marriage to Chiyoko.

During the next thirteen years, Shunsō kept experimenting in order to create a new type of *Nihonga*. His works can be seen as an ongoing reply to the question Tenshin had reportedly put to his Institute painters, "Is there any way to depict the air?" As a major painter of the Institute, Shunsō initiated experiments with ways to create chiaroscuro in color: he dispensed with traditional ink line contours. Instead of leaving an unpainted surface around a motif to suggest the existence of space, he painted in such space, often trying to capture natural atmospheric changes at dawn or dusk, in mist or fog. His works, however, turned out to be highly controversial, and were often harshly criticized outside the Institute. To eyes unaccustomed to "rendition without contours," his paintings hardly seemed like paintings. The derogatory term *mōrō-tai* or "hazy style" was coined in a newspaper review critical of his style. Taikan was attempting a similar stylistic change, but it was Shunsō who led the way, convinced that his critics were carping simply out of misunderstanding.

Shunsō and Taikan wanted to further develop their work by studying art in the West. In early 1903, the two artists began their trip with a voyage to India. Tenshin had been asked to send Japanese artists to decorate the interior of the palace of the Tipperah Kingdom, where Rabindranath Tagore served as an advisor to the prince. When this plan was cancelled, preventing them from using their expected earnings from this commission to travel on to Europe, the Tagore family arranged for them to exhibit about forty paintings in Calcutta before returning to Japan. After this trip, Shunsō more often mixed Western pigments with Japanese traditional colors.

In early 1904, Shunsō and Taikan finally set off for the West. Accompanying Tenshin, they left Yokohama on the very day Japan declared war with Russia. Tenshin was going to take up a curatorial appointment at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and they hoped to rely on his contacts in America to hold exhibitions and make enough money to then travel to Europe. The Japan Art Institute had already begun to fall into financial difficulties. And the coming war would damage its artists' livelihood even more.

A month after their arrival in New York, Shunsō and Taikan exhibited some fifty paintings at the prestigious Century Club. Tenshin had arranged this opportunity through his friends, including John LaFarge. One third were sold, and Shunsō wrote his brother that his earnings far surpassed what he could have gained in Japan, particularly during wartime. Shunsō and Taikan held further exhibitions with the help of Tenshin's friends in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and then at the National Arts Club, New York, and at the Fisher Gallery, Washington, D.C. When Tenshin was invited to St. Louis to give a lecture at the Congress of Art and Science, they accompanied him to see the World's Fair there. With enough earnings, at last, to travel to Europe, they sailed to London, and went on to France and Italy before arriving back in Japan in August 1905. By this time Japan was on the verge of winning its war with Russia.

When Tenshin decided to move the Institute's headquarters away from Tokyo in 1906, Shunsō again followed him to form a small artist community, often called the Japanese Barbizon. During the following one and half years in Izura, a small fishing village in Ibaraki Prefecture, Shunsō again undertook very bold experiments. The importance of Rinpa art had been confirmed to him during his travels, as the Japanese equivalent to European Impressionism in the rendering of color. Earlier in 1902 Shunsō had been praised by some critics as a modern successor to the Rinpa masters, and he had stressed, upon returning from the West, his respect for this national heritage in a pamphlet entitled "On Painting." As is evident in his later works, his interest in Rinpa art remained the basic component of his art for the rest of his life. Unfortunately his eyesight began to deteriorate; in spring 1908 he had to stop painting and returned to Tokyo for treatment.

When he was somewhat recuperated, Shunsō painted a pair of six-panel screens, *Fallen Leaves* (Ochiba), for the 1909 Bunten. Tenshin praised it as "the finest masterpiece I have recently seen." Shunsō's acute observation of nature is combined with subtle decorative effects in a work of monumental quietude. The viewer feels totally enveloped in this tranquillity; the senses of sight, sound, and touch all seem enlivened but calmed in the early morning mist in the woods. Shunsō's subsequent paintings grew even quieter, and his motifs more still. Apparently done in the Rinpa style, they actually reveal his profound study of Chinese paintings of the Southern Song (1127–1279) and Ming (1368–1644) dynasties, as seen in *A Black Cat* (Kuroki neko), 1910 shown at the fourth Bunten. By the time he was painting his last screen masterpiece *Early Spring* (Sōshun) in 1911, his kidney disease had worsened and his eyesight was almost completely lost. He died in total blindness later that year.

(Hiroko T. McDermott)

Ikeda Yōson, 1895–1988
池田 遙邨



Ikeda Yōson was born in Okayama Prefecture. His father's work for a textile company necessitated many moves for the family. As a young boy, Yōson lived for a time in Shanghai, Osaka, and Fukuyama in Hiroshima Prefecture. Having to move constantly was very hard on Yōson, but his interest in travel and faraway places must have originated with this early life.

Yōson's childhood interest in painting and drawing was not discouraged. In 1911, his father sent him to Osaka to study with Matsubara Sangorō (1864–1946), the Okayama-born *yōga* painter who had studied with Goseda Hōryū (1827–1892) and established his private teaching atelier, Tensai Gajuku, in 1885. The training was rigorous and the discipline strict. Yōson

could not endure the disciplined life at the school's dormitory, and in less than a year he chose to continue his studies while living at home.

In 1913, when he was just eighteen years old, Yōson had his first solo exhibition at the Chamber of Commerce and Industry in the city of Fukuyama, where father had been recently transferred. The *Nihonga* painter Ono Chikkyō saw the show and was very impressed. It was about this time that Yōson became interested in *Nihonga*, although he still painted in the *yōga* style. A month after Yōson had a work accepted by the 1914 Bunten, he enlisted in the army. After his discharge two years later, Yōson began to study *Nihonga* on his own. When his folding screen was rejected at the 1918 Bunten, he decided to seek formal training in *Nihonga* and entered Takeuchi Seihō's *juku* in Kyoto, on the recommendation of Ono Chikkyō in 1919. There Yōson joined Chikkyō and Tsuchida Bakusen, who had founded the Association for the Creation of National Painting (Kokuga Sōsaku Kyōkai) the year before. His first *Nihonga* paintings were accepted in the government-sponsored exhibitions, reorganized and renamed Teiten, in 1919 and 1920. In 1921, Yōson entered the Kyoto Municipal Special School of Painting (Kyoto Shiritsu Kaiga Senmon Gakkō). He was an indifferent student, often missed classes, and had his submission to the Teiten rejected that year.

Yōson's fondness for the European painters Munch and Goya ushered him into the very somber and dark period of his art. Inspired by the themes and stylistic devices of Munch and Goya, Yōson approached painting as a way to explore poverty and death and other tragedies of human existence. When the Great Kantō Earthquake struck Tokyo and its environs in 1923, Yōson went to the nation's capital to make sketches of the devastated landscape and portray the tragic aftereffect. He submitted *Ruins After the Catastrophe* (Saika no ato) to the Teiten exhibition of 1924, but the jury did not accept it. Even Yōson's teacher, Seihō, commented, "Truth does not consist of misery alone." Admitting that such grim paintings would not help his career, Yōson strove to take his subject matter from nature and even managed to introduce some humor into his work.

Toward the end of the 1920s Yōson's work reflected the general introspective mood of the country after the earthquake. At the same time, however, Yōson retained a certain level of humor, which would resurface again after World War II. In 1928 and 1929 he made journeys to sketch along the old Tōkaidō road. He completed *Fifty-Three Scenes of Tōkaidō* (Tōkaidō gojūsan-tsugi zue) and *Celebrated Sites of Over 60 Regions of Japan* (Nihon rokujū-yo-shū meisho zue) in 1933 and 1934.

In the mid-1930s, Yōson began to take an interest in the work of the *Nihonga* artist Tomita Keisen. Yōson's paintings from 1936 through a few years after the War suggest that he was refining his taste for the quiet beauty of nature. By 1947, however, Yōson had shifted into another mode, with Keisen's influence almost completely disappearing. His late paintings, such as *Recollection of the Golden Pavilion* (Kinkaku tsuisō) and *Osaka After the War* (Sengo no Osaka) take up the realm of fantasy, surely a result of the confusion and disorder in a defeated nation.

Imamura Shikō, 1880–1916
今村 紫紅



Famous for saying, "I will destroy the old so as to create the new," Imamura Shikō squeezed a remarkable range of stylistic change into his 36 brief years. Like many Meiji artists, Shikō sought to fuse Japanese and Western art. But the complex nature of his stylistic fusion not only set him apart from his contemporaries but also paradoxically led to his eventual call for a distinctly modern Japanese art.

Shikō's uninhibited exploration of the possibilities of *Nihonga* can probably be traced to his childhood in the bustling, international port of Yokohama. His father ran a shop dealing in Japanese lanterns, popular export items because of the colorful designs sketched on their exotic paper-and-bamboo frames. Shikō and his elder brother took painting lessons, probably so they could provide attractive designs for the family business. Unlike his brother Yasunosuke (artist name Kōsō), who studied traditional *Yamato-e* style painting, Shikō learned Western watercolor painting from Yamada Umanosuke, who was an amateur practitioner of watercolor painting in the style of J.M.W. Turner and made most of his living by commerce. Yet he not only taught Shikō some skills in the art of watercolor but also seemed to have induced in him a lifelong admiration for the work of Utamaro (1753–1806) and some other *ukiyo-e* artists.

Afterwards, for whatever reason, Shikō did not practice Western-style painting. When he came to Tokyo in 1897 with his brother, he studied under Matsumoto Fūko (1840–1923), a noted painter of a conventional *Yamato-e* style. A year later, when Shikō began to exhibit publicly, Fūko's preference for and treatment of historical subjects were evident in his works.

The early 1900s saw a major development in Shikō's study of history painting. He joined Kōji-kai, a small group of young artists advocating a new style in painting historical subjects, and soon became a close friend of one of the group's leaders, Yasuda Yukihiko. Shikō's easygoing personality and fresh artistic ideas rapidly won him the respect of the group's other members. Until the group's dissolution in 1913 he was considered a co-leader along with Yukihiko.

In the spring of 1907 Shikō and Yukihiko were invited to study at the Japan Art Institute (Nihon Bijutsu-in) in Izura. Their works had already been somewhat influenced by the Institute painters, but there Shikō saw some of Shunsō's experimental work, especially his sensitive use of colors to produce an overall aesthetic harmony. It was a major revelation for Shikō, whose work, over the next few years, displayed Shunsō's influence, especially in the use of dotted brushwork.

Around 1910 Shikō's stylistic interests began to expand through his more extensive study of traditional Japanese and Chinese art. Even when he was working as a painter of historical subjects, his interest had not been so much in meaning or theme as something more purely visual and artistically stimulating. Shunsō had already shown great interest in the art of the Rinpa school, particularly the painting of Ogata Kōrin (1658–1716). But Shikō, perhaps at Okakura Tenshin's encouragement, preferred the more dynamic work of Sōtatsu (d.1643?), an early Rinpa artist who had been relatively unknown. He also studied Edo-period genre paintings, which enabled him to debut at the Bunten in 1911 with a pair of screens on a historical genre subject done in a decorative style. The screens won him a generous two-year grant from Hara Sankei (Tomitarō), a Yokohama businessman and art collector who supported promising young painters. For the first time since his father's death in 1903 and his marriage in 1907, Shikō could devote himself solely to his art, free of the pressure to find extra income to support his mother, sister, and wife.

In his final years, Shikō's interest shifted to *nanga*, the Tokugawa adaption of Chinese literati painting that had often been discredited in the government-sponsored exhibitions in the early Meiji. The free eye and brushwork of *nanga* artists stimulated his interest, as is evident in his *Eight Views of Ōmi*, 1912 (Plate 128). The set of eight hanging scrolls attracted much censure at the 1912 Bunten for their bold, eye-opening

compositions and pointillist-like brushwork. But the dazzling originality of the set soon won it recognition as a masterpiece and triggered a rebirth of interest in *nanga*.

As Shikō's interest in *nanga* intensified, so did his respect grow for late-seventeenth-century Chinese masters like Daoji (1642–1707) and Gong Xian (c.1619–1689), and for Tomioka Tessai, a contemporary Kyoto literati painter. When Tessai's first private exhibition was held in April 1913, Shikō persuaded Yukihiko to accompany him to Osaka to see it. His devotion to *nanga* also led him to study bird-and-flower painting as well as calligraphy. His later works, including those shown in three exhibitions of the Sekiyō-kai, a small group of painters he headed at the end of his life, all show him grappling with a wide variety of *nanga* art. By then, his appreciation of *nanga* seems to have moved beyond visual style to involve a more encompassing spirit.

For some years Shikō had suffered from a chronic liver ailment; in late 1913 it forced him to spend a month in the hospital. Feeling the need to break free from Japan and what he had already learned, he ignored his doctor's advice and boarded a freighter for India in late February 1914. After a brief stay in Calcutta and stops in south China, Manchuria, and Korea, he returned to Japan three months later. His impressions crystallized in *Handscrolls of the Tropical Country* (Nekkoku no maki). Shown at the first exhibition of the Reorganized Japan Art Institute (he had just become a full member), this pair of handscrolls was a powerful fusion of decorative Rinpa effects, brushwork in a pointillist mode, a flood of tropical colors, and a South Asian subject, all presented in the traditional handscroll format. If the remaining two pairs of handscrolls, on China and Korea, had been finished as he had originally planned, the set would have boldly expressed the pan-Asian idealism of the Institute before World War II.

After suffering a fainting attack in early 1915, Shikō was only able to return to work by the fall. His final masterpiece, *Setting Sun, Rising Moon* (Iru hi, izuru tsuki), was painted from impressions gathered during a trip along the Tōkaidō with other Institute artists. Once again, the strong colors of his work aroused both praise and controversy. It was destroyed during the 1923 Great Kantō Earthquake, but its surviving preparatory drawings testify to his lifelong study of pointillism and his deep admiration for the *nanga* tradition.

On the very day he had finished moving into a new house built on the estate of his friend and patron Yoshida Kōzaburō, Shikō suffered a fatal stroke. Typically, he had just been talking with friends about art.

(Hiroko T. McDermott)

Irie Hakō, 1887–1948
入江 波光



Born in Kyoto, Irie Hakō received his first painting lessons from Morimoto Tōkaku while he was still in middle school. Tōkaku was a Shijō-school painter and the second son of Kōno Bairei. When he graduated from middle school in 1901, Hakō immediately entered the Kyoto Municipal School of Arts and Crafts (Kyoto Shiritsu Bijutsu Kōgei Gakkō). Hakō was undecided about what to do after his graduation in 1905, first apprenticing as a textile dyer, then enlisting in the army. After being discharged in 1907, he returned to the School of Arts and Crafts to take advanced studies and met the two friends who would greatly influence his later career: Murakami Kagaku and Sakakibara Shihō. In his first year there, his painting *Evening Moon* (Yūzuki) was accepted into the first Bunten.

Two years later when the Kyoto Municipal Special School of Painting (Kyoto Shiritsu Kaiga Senmon Gakkō) was newly opened, Hakō, Kagaku, and Shihō were admitted as second-year students. Hakō graduated from the Special School of Painting two years later in 1911. His graduation piece, *Plum Forest Behind Kitano Shrine* (Kitano no ura no ume), received the fourth award at the Exhibition of New and Old Art (*Shinko bijutsuhin ten*) that year.

Commissioned by the School of Arts and Crafts, Hakō went to Tokyo to see the collections of the Tokyo School of Fine Arts (Tokyo Bijutsu Gakkō) and the Imperial Household Museum (Teishitsu Hakubutsukan) and made copies of old paintings. It was a good opportunity for Hakō to gain a clearer understanding of traditional motifs and techniques. Copying the works of the Japanese masters and teaching about them to students at the School of Arts and Crafts became one of the most important aspects of Hakō's life. He was not particularly interested in pursuing a successful career as a painter and tended to withdraw from circles of more ambitious artists; he preferred to study and copy old paintings, and to teach.

In 1918, indignant at the poor treatment the official art world gave them, Ono Chikkyō, Tsuchida Bakusen, Shihō, Kagaku, and Nonagase Banka (1889–1964) formed the Association for the Creation of National Painting (Kokuga Sōsaku Kyōkai). They were convinced they could create for themselves a more supportive environment in which to exhibit their work. They invited Hakō to join, but he declined at first, saying that his professional experience was inadequate. Instead, he took a post as assistant professor at the Special School of Painting, working with Kikuchi Keigetsu. Although he was hesitant to become a member of the Association, he nevertheless did submit a painting to its first exhibition in 1918. *Temptation* (Gōma), an eerie work depicting the temptation of Shakyamuni by evil spirits, won the exhibition's Kokuga (National Painting) award. Encouraged by this success, Hakō joined the Association the next year. The paintings he showed at the Association's two subsequent exhibitions had a haunting, austere beauty, as if illuminated by a strange and otherworldly light.

The Association's exhibition was cancelled in 1921, for Bakusen, Banka, and Chikkyō had embarked on a study trip to Europe. Hakō was able to take his own trip abroad several months later, with the help of a grant from the Kyoto Government, travelling to Europe with Keigetsu and Nakai Sōtarō. Hakō was particularly eager to see ancient Roman art and Italian Renaissance paintings; the works he painted during his travel and after his return, such as *Green Grove*, 1923 (Plate 148), reveal a strong Mediterranean influence.

After the Association disbanded in 1928, due to financial difficulties and artistic differences among its members, Hakō again withdrew from the art world to resume teaching and copying the works of the old masters. Copying old paintings meant to him more than just producing beautiful and convincing reproductions: he sought to comprehend the spirit of the artist who had made the original. From 1929 to 1932, he spent his time copying the Kōan handscroll of *Stories of Kitano Tenjin Shrine* (Kitano tenjin engi emaki, Kōan-bon). From 1939 he was involved in the project of copying the murals of Hōryūji temple, to which Hakō devoted the rest of his life. Even though the Hōryūji project consumed most of his time, he was able to paint some individual works, including *Mañjuśrī Mounted on Lion*, 1940 (Plate 62), which reveals his accomplishment in ink.

Iwahashi Eien, b.1903
岩橋 英遠



In the postwar period, Iwahashi Eien's works, while within the parameters of the *Nihonga* tradition, show strongly abstract qualities that have given him a reputation as an artist who has creatively bridged the gap between the traditions of *Nihonga* and *yōga*.

Eien was a son of pioneers who had settled in the present-day Takikawa city on the northern island of Hokkaidō. After finishing the first six grades of school, Eien was befriended by a member of the Issui-kai art group, Ichigi Masuzō of Sapporo, and began to study Western-style oil painting. His talents took him to Tokyo, where he enrolled in the studio of Okada Saburōsuke (1869–1939), one of the more fashionable *yōga* painters of the period. Eien's burgeoning interests in *Nihonga*, however, led him in 1923 to begin to study with Yamauchi Tamon (1878–1932), a former student of Hashimoto Gahō and Kawai Gyokudō.

By the time of Yamauchi's death in 1932, Eien's work was being accepted in the exhibitions organized by Seiryū-sha and the New *Nihonga* Study Group (Shin Nihonga Kenkyūkai) that was founded by Fukuda Toyoshirō and others in 1934. He had his works accepted for the exhibition of the Japan Art Institute (Nihon Bijutsu-in) in 1934 and 1936, becoming an associate member, and then a full member in 1953. Taken with the work of Yasuda Yukihiko, the leading member of the Institute, Eien considered himself a disciple of Yukihiko and frequently visited the older artist to ask for his advice. Eien became a formal student of Yukihiko after World War II. Two students of Yukihiko, Kayama Jirō and Akai Shinsei, taught Eien the basics of *Nihonga*.

The late 1930s was a period of experimentation for Eien. In 1938, he and the former members of New *Nihonga* Study Group participated in the establishment of the Rekitei Art Association (Rekitei Bijutsu Kyōkai). The Association's elected leader, Shinomiya Jun'ichi, lectured on the new European currents of Surrealism and Freudian theory. At the same time, traditional Japanese art, including the work of Tawaraya Sōtatsu (d.1643?), a pioneer of the Rinpa movement, became the subject of discussion. Exposed to these ideas, Eien began to develop a style of painting that included the use of strong abstract elements. He discussed his experiments with one of the leading Japanese Surrealist poets, Takiguchi Shūzō (1903–1979), who had introduced the writings of the French poet André Breton into Japan. Eien also was in contact with the Art Culture Association (Bijutsu Bunka Kyōkai) which was headed by a leading Western-style painter of the period, Fukuzawa Ichirō (1898–1992). Fukuzawa had studied painting in France in the 1920s and his Surrealist paintings were among the most accomplished avant-garde experiments of the prewar years.

Iwahashi's career reached its mature phase in the postwar period, when he enjoyed a reputation both as a painter and as a teacher at the Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music (Tokyo Geijutsu Daigaku). In an interview he gave in 1978, Eien commented that he was a typical *dosanko* (native of Hokkaidō), and this characteristic showed in his paintings. The comment was probably made in reference to his themes of nature and closeness to the land. Former students at the university spoke of Eien as an encouraging and nurturing teacher who was seldom critical. Eien stated that "I don't teach anything to young people. Nay, it's good because I don't teach anything. I don't teach them anything saying that I was not taught anything by my teacher.... When I am fed something forcibly, then I feel that it is good at the time but when I look at it later on, nothing is there." When the interviewer commented that this was a Zen-like approach and that modern education spoon-fed students too much, Eien replied that "People who grow, grow rapidly. People who don't grow, regardless of how much teaching, are no good." Iwahashi seemed to feel that art is not something that can be taught but rather is something that the student seeks to learn for himself. Eien's thirty-some years of experimentation and apprenticeship under various masters, which resulted in an individual style that makes use of traditional Japanese decorative elements and themes as well as European Surrealism and abstraction, is evidence of his thoughts about learning and art put into practice.

(Brenda G. Jordan and Hiroshi Nara)

Kaburaki Kiyokata, 1878–1972
鏑木 清方



During his long life, Kaburaki Kiyokata was highly renowned as an illustrator, painter, and essayist, a spread of talents so rare as to find no equivalent in the history of modern Japanese art. Kiyokata the painter is often said to have worked for the modern development of *ukiyo-e*. His deep attachment to literature, however, marks him rather as the last artist in an older tradition of Japanese art: painting inspired by literature. In his art and life, he appears to resemble the Kyoto painter and scholar Tomioka Tessai, although Kiyokata looked back to his beloved old Tokyo, and Tessai to China.

Raised in downtown Tokyo during the first half of Meiji, Kiyokata, the "son of late-Edo culture," sought to recreate in both the visual and literary arts the city's traditional life. His abiding nostalgia for the fading culture of old Tokyo was combined with a clarity of style and a highly sophisticated command of color and brushwork. He cared little for the nation-building agendas that fired the passions of so many modern Japanese painters and writers, or for the distinctions that modernists drew between high and popular culture. His art lay not in theories but in the details, achieving a quiet refinement matched by few painters of his generation.

Kiyokata's lifelong love of old Tokyo was nurtured in his childhood, when late-Edo popular culture was still deeply rooted in the daily life of commoners in the city's downtown area. His family and his nanny were great fans of Kabuki and entertainment fiction. Their friends and neighbors included more than a few noted figures of early Meiji culture, such as the *ukiyo-e* artist Andō Hiroshige III (1842–1894) and the lacquer craftsman and painter Shibata Zeshin (1807–1891). Kiyokata even went to school with the children of Kabuki actors.

The greatest influence upon his art and life, however, seems to have been his father, Jōno Saigiku Denpei (1832–1902), who had been a popular writer and journalist. As a co-founder of the *Tokyo Nichinichi* newspaper, the first daily newspaper in Tokyo, and

then the owner of the *Yamato shinbun*, Saigiku had a range of contacts in both art and literary circles, including the *ukiyo-e* artists Ochiai Yoshiiku (1833–1904) and Tsukioka Yoshitoshi (1839–1892), and the *rakugo* performer San'yūtei Enchō (1839–1900).

Although Kiyokata originally wished to become a writer, his father seems to have encouraged him to become an illustrator. He began to take painting lessons at the age of thirteen with Mizuno Toshikata (1866–1908), another family friend, and the most popular illustrator of the *Yamato shinbun*. Three years later, in 1894, Kiyokata replaced his teacher at the newspaper in order to help its finance.

His career quickly blossomed. He received commissions from local newspapers, often to illustrate the serialized novels so popular with Meiji readers. Then, in 1897, he designed the frontispiece for the first piece of fiction by Yamagishi Kayō (1876–1945) in *Shincho gekkan* (New Books Monthly), one of the many literary monthlies that sprang up around the turn of the century. Kiyokata also became acquainted with Yamagishi's teacher, Ozaki Kōyō (1867–1903) and in 1903 designed a frontispiece for *The Demon Gold* (Konjiki yasha), the last novel by this best-selling author.

Kiyokata was most active as an illustrator during the first few years of the 1900s. He was a full-time illustrator for *Jinmin shinbun* in 1899–1901 and for the *Yomiuri* newspaper, then the leading paper in literary circles, in 1901–1902. His illustrations and frontispieces also appeared in other new magazines such as *Shin-shōsetsu* (New Novels) and *Kabuki*. In 1901, Kiyokata executed the frontispiece and book design for *Triptych* (Sanmai tsuzuki), a novel by Izumi Kyōka (1873–1939) whose works he greatly admired. During their long friendship Kiyokata continued to be Kyōka's illustrator even after he limited his illustration work. In 1951, probably in commemoration of the thirteenth memorial service for Kyōka, the 73-year-old Kiyokata painted *Novelist and Illustrator* (Shōsetsuka to sashiegaka), recalling the first meeting of these two young professionals. Kiyokata also received a personal request from Shimazaki Tōson (1872–1943), who had come to Tokyo with the manuscript of his first novel, *Broken Commandment* (Hakai, 1906), to do a frontispiece for its private edition. But at the peak of his career as an illustrator, Kiyokata grew determined to concentrate more on painting and gave up his post on the *Yomiuri* in 1902.

Kiyokata had already made his debut as a painter at the second competitive exhibition of the Japan Painting Association (Nihon Kaiga Kyōkai) in 1897. Four years later he became a founding member of the Ugō-kai, a small group of young painters who had shifted from illustration to painting. He was a regular and active participant in their exhibitions for the next decade. In 1903 he married Tsuzuki Teru, a younger sister of a fellow member of the Ugō-kai.

It was not easy to show work at such major exhibitions as the Bunten. Kiyokata did not have a painting accepted until its third exhibition in 1909. He managed to exhibit several more times, but he failed again to gain entry in 1912, and could not complete his work for submission in 1916. He twice suffered nervous breakdowns in his mid-thirties. After he was appointed to the jury for the Teiten in 1919, he chose to exhibit only intermittently at such government exhibitions.

Many of Kiyokata's masterpieces were painted during the 1920s and 1930s. It was also during the 1930s that he advocated "tabletop art," that is, works small enough to be held in the hand for intimate appreciation, such as an album, handscroll, or *tanzaku*. This appeal, which countered Kawabata Ryūshi's call for *kaijō geijutsu* or "exhibition hall art," expressed Kiyokata's own preference as an artist.

Just as his father had spent his final years writing historical essays about early-nineteenth-century Edo, so Kiyokata in middle age grew more absorbed with making a visual and written record of Meiji life. He painted posthumous portraits of such noted Tokyo residents as San'yūtei Enchō (Plate 86), a *rakugo* performer he remembered with respect and affection; Higuchi Ichiyō, his favorite mid-Meiji female writer (painted in 1940); and Dr. Fujikake Shizuya, an early art historian of *ukiyo-e* (painted in 1941). A collection of his essays was published in 1934, and ten more volumes followed in the next decade, including his celebrated autobiographical work, *Records of My Life* (Koshikata no ki, 1941). This shift to personal memoirs may have been his way of avoiding serious involvement in the nation's war effort, which he privately criticized. Another volume of autobiographical essays came out in 1967, followed by eight volumes of magazine essays posthumously compiled in 1979–1980.

Although he resided and painted in Kamakura during the last three decades of his life, Kiyokata's attachment to old Tokyo never waned. And in his style of life he remained a Meiji man of letters.

(Hiroko T. McDermott)

Kanō Hōgai, 1828–1888
狩野 芳崖



Hōgai's last six years won him the status of a crucial figure in the revival and development of *Nihonga*. If he had not returned to Tokyo in 1877 at the age of 49, if he had not worked for Ernest Fenollosa, if he had not helped establish the Tokyo School of Fine Arts (Tokyo Bijutsu Gakkō), and, above all, if he had not been from the Chōfu domain of western Honshū, and home of important Meiji politicians, his name might well have been remembered merely as one of many painters from the final generation of the Kanō school. For a century art historians have shied away from examining how his artistic reputation was made from these non-artistic accidents.

The posthumous fabrication of Hōgai's reputation took time to gather momentum. His works appear to have had little impact on painters of his own or the next generation. Many of his later works, which reputedly played so influential a role in the development of *Nihonga*, were taken by Ernest Fenollosa and William S. Bigelow to the United States in 1890. Only a small number of these paintings ever returned to Tokyo, and were exhibited at the 1917 memorial service honoring the thirtieth anniversary of his death. Even his last work, *The Compassionate Kannon* (Hibo Kannon), 1888, which was retained by the Tokyo School of Fine Arts, was not publicly exhibited until 1910. Although his reputation has been closely associated with this school, he died before its first class was ever held. His death attracted no obituary in any art journal, except one written a year later by Okakura Tenshin, his colleague-to-be at the school. In short, his presence and passage in the Meiji art scene aroused minimal attention in Japan until well into the twentieth century.

The few ascertainable facts about Hōgai's life are likewise disappointingly vague. We know little of his early years and his activities before 1877 remain particularly obscure, while accounts of his last six years in Tokyo are largely legends about his contact with Fenollosa and Itō Hirobumi, his eccentricity, and his poverty.

As the first son in a family which for generations had served the Chōfu domain as Kanō painters, Hōgai was sent to study at the Kobiki-chō atelier of Kanō school in Edo in 1846. He made quick progress, becoming a head student in four years. He also attended lectures by the nationalist thinker Sakuma Shōzan (1811–1864) whose influence on Hōgai persisted to the end of his life, when he still would proudly brush calligraphy in the style of Shōzan. Upon finishing his art training in 1852, Hōgai served at the Edo-residence of the Chōfu domain. In 1860, he helped his teacher, Kanō Shōsen'in Tadanobu (1823–1880), decorate the ceiling of a grand hall in Edo Castle. While back in Chōfu in 1864, he helped carry out a land survey; and he put to use his gun-making skills, acquired from Shōzan, in order to prepare the Chōshū domain for the Battle of Shimonoseki against four Western nations. He also appears to have done some intelligence work in the 1860s. But the Meiji Restoration deprived him of a master and a job. It forced him to turn his hand to business, and invariably he failed.

In 1877, Hōgai and his wife came to Tokyo, shortly before the first Domestic Industrial Exposition (*Naikoku kangyō hakurankai*). His decision to move to Tokyo when he was close to retirement age seems to have been prompted by the suggestion of his old friend Fujishima Tsuneoki. Failing to land a government job, he is said to have resorted to eking out a living by sketching on pottery and lacquer ware for export. Two years later Hōgai's fortune began to improve when he established ties with some former lords of western Japan, the home provinces of the Meiji government's elite. At the recommendation of Hashimoto Gahō, a painter friend from their days in the Kobikī-chō Kanō studio, Hōgai received commissions from the Shimazu family, which had governed the Satsuma domain. In 1881 he was hired as one of several artists to decorate the new residence of his former lord. Hōgai's relationship with Gahō grew even closer when his adopted son married Gahō's third daughter.

Hōgai's next patron, the foreigner Ernest Fenollosa, would play a key role in shaping Hōgai's posthumous reputation and biography. In 1882, when Hōgai exhibited eight hanging scrolls at the first Domestic Painting Competitive Exhibition (*Naikoku kaiga kyōshinkai*), he seems to have been introduced to Fenollosa by Kanō Tomonobu (1843–1912), another acquaintance from his days in the Kobiki-chō school. At a monthly salary of twenty yen, he began to produce paintings for Fenollosa, under his personal instruction. The first large-scale work Hōgai painted under Fenollosa's influence won a minor award at the second Domestic Painting Competitive Exhibition in 1884. But most of the works he produced under this arrangement were exhibited at Kanga-kai, an art club founded by Fenollosa and financially sponsored by Bigelow. Their annual competition awarded winners with cash, instead of the certificates of merit given out in other exhibitions. Hōgai's star rose in 1886 when he won the first prize of fifty yen for *Guardian Holding Ogres* (Niō sokki), a work partly painted in Western pigments given to him by Fenollosa.

Hōgai's career climaxed in the last four years of his life when he received government appointments. He was made a member of a committee formed in late 1884 by the Ministry of Education to draw up a curriculum for the new art school. In 1886 he joined Tenshin and Fenollosa in a month-long survey of old art in Kyoto and Nara. Eventually, just two months before his death, he was appointed painting teacher at the new school (expected to open in 1889). Once again, however, details from this period have remained obscure. Instead, an oft-repeated anecdote has Hōgai intrude on, and persuade, Itō Hirobumi, the Chōshū politician who then dominated the Meiji government, to base the new art school's curriculumn on traditional Japanese, rather than Western, art.

When his wife died in July 1887, Hōgai began to paint *The Compassionate Kannon*. In 1883 he had painted a Kannon (now in the Freer Art Gallery) for the 1884 Japanese Art Exhibition in Paris (*Pari Nihon bijutsu jūrankai*). For a new version, Hōgai fused Japanese and Chinese images with the Western representation of the Madonna and Child (this last idea was perhaps suggested by Fenollosa). His use of Western pigments with a large amount of gold added a special effect to the painting. Just before it was completed, however, Hōgai suddenly fell ill. He died a few days later, leaving the final touching up with gold powder to his old friend Gahō.

(Hiroko T. McDermott)

Kataoka Tamako, b.1905
片岡 球子



Early in her studies of *Nihonga*, Kataoka Tamako took drawing lessons from Tomita On'ichirō, a *yōga* artist. Detecting a powerful personality in her work, Tomita advised his young student that she was better suited to *yōga*. Ignoring his advice, Tamako continued to pursue *Nihonga* while working for thirty years as an elementary school teacher. She eventually emerged as one of the most individualistic *Nihonga* artists of her generation. Her work was frequently characterized as *ishoku*, suggesting "unique" but literally meaning "of a different color."

Born to a *sake* brewer in Sapporo, Hokkaidō, Tamako studied *Nihonga* at the Women's Special School of Art (Joshi Bijutsu Senmon Gakkō) in Tokyo, receiving instruction from Yoshimura Tadao (1898–1952), a former student of Matsuoka Eikyū (1881–1938). Later, she studied with Nakajima Kiyoshi (1899–1989), a painter affiliated with the Japan Art Institute (Nihon Bijutsu-in). After several rejections by the Teiten, she was first accepted by the Japan Art Institute's exhibition in 1930. Subsequently, the Institute became the place of her lifelong study: Tamako was, in fact, indebted to the guidance of many Institute artists, including Yasuda Yukihiko with whom she began studying in 1946. Kobayashi Kokei, however, touched the heart of Tamako's art in 1941: "People have called your painting *getemono* ["inferior" or "bizarre"]. Indeed your current work is nothing but *getemono*. But the line between a *getemono* and an authentic masterpiece is very thin.... You must not change your style." What Kokei called *getemono*, a kind of genuine naïveté and lack of refinement, is what Tamako eventually developed into her distinct style. Twenty years after Kokei's comment, Tamako saw Jean Dubuffet's work in Paris: the brutal power of Dubuffet's painting reaffirmed the direction in her own art.

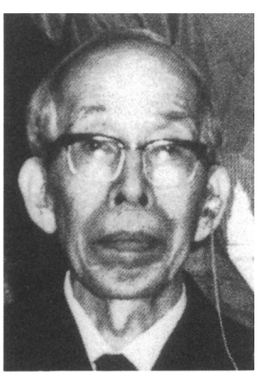
Tamako's art blossomed fully during the 1960s. While exploring landscape themes exemplified by *Volcano (Mt. Asama)*, 1965 (Plate 163), she also conceived *Appearance* (Tsuragamae), the most definitive series of

her career, in 1966. In this series of portraits of historical personages, Tamako created a thoroughly unconventional "history painting," distinct from the elegant, classicizing style typical of this genre. Both in landscape and figure painting, she revealed a penchant for the dramatic subject, which she translated to a powerful visual image at once decorative and expressive. The tactile surface and bursting colors that characterize Tamako's mature style are attributed by the artist to her experience in Hokkaidō, where long snow-covered winters made one sensitive to any surface texture and color that appeared in early spring.

Among the subjects of her portrait series, Tamako identified most strongly with the *ukiyo-e* artists who, she believed, fulfilled an absolute commitment to art, even to the point of defying the government authorities. Her respect for the *ukiyo-e* artists mirrors her own resolute pursuit of art: she persisted during her slow career and, as an staunch individualist, she refused to conform to traditionally established bounderies of *Nihonga*, or be influenced by her own teachers.

(Michiyo Morioka)

Katayama Nanpū, 1887–1980
堅山 南風



Katayama Nanpū shared a new sophistication in subject matter and technique with many artists who reached their first artistic maturity in the Taishō period. Nanpū worked in a number of genres—landscapes, *kachō-ga* (bird-and-flower painting), and historical subjects—but his lively portraits and paintings based on contemporary life are the basis of his reputation as one of the more innovative artists of his period.

Born in Kumamoto in the southern island of Kyūshū, Nanpū first studied *Nihonga* with the local artist Fukushima Hōun, then went to Tokyo in 1909 to study with Takahashi Kōko (1875–1912), a history painter who was also a native of Kumamoto Prefecture. While working with Kōko, Nanpū's work caught the eye of Yokoyama Taikan, who was some twenty years his senior and already a famous artist. Taikan encouraged Nanpū to submit a painting to the 1913 Bunten; Nanpū's entry, *Around November* (Shimotsuki-goro), was chosen as one of the best in show. To those who argued that a newcomer should not win a top prize, Taikan insisted that the quality of the work was worthy of the award. Overwhelmed by Taikan's strong support, Nanpū came to consider himself a disciple of the older painter. When Taikan reorganized the Japan Art Institute (Nihon Bijutsu-in) in 1914, Nanpū was made a member. Like his mentor Taikan, Nanpū also decided to travel outside Japan. Europe seemed impossible because of World War I, but Nanpū did visit India in 1916.

During his long career, Nanpū created diverse works in a variety of popular styles. His scroll of the Great Kantō Earthquake of 1923 remains one of the most evocative artistic responses to the disaster (Figure 5.8). Within the visual styles appropriate to a scroll painting, the artist was able to capture the destruction of Tokyo as well as the humanity of those who suffered. The scroll illustrated his ability to sketch from life, or as his credo went, to "observe carefully, then sketch." These abilities, combined with his literary interests, made Nanpū an especially fine portraitist, his talent evident in the portraits of his mentor Taikan and the novelist Mushanokōji Saneatsu (1885–1976), who was dedicated to the humanitarian ideals of the Russian writer Tolstoy (Plates 89 and 91).

In an article published in 1968, Nanpū commented on the fact that the qualities often found in the art of children, of purity and innocence, produce an effect, despite its roughness, that is bold, lively, and straightforward. As children grow older, he noted, their art becomes more realistic and uninteresting. "What," he asked, "would happen if a child and his art grew without losing this innocence? He would be a formidable artist!" In Nanpū's view, a lack of worldly concern was the basis for the highest art; yet the realities of the world and his own common sense forced him to admit his own limitations.

His skill in recording his visual observations, his understanding of the society about him, and the realistic opinion of his own limitations made Nanpū a superlative chronicler of the events and personalities of his time.

(Brenda G. Jordan and Hiroshi Nara)

Kawabata Gyokushō, 1842–1913
川端 玉章



Born to a family of *maki-e* (lacquer) artists in Kyoto, Kawabata Gyokushō began to study painting with a well-known Maruyama-school artist, Nakajima Raishō (1796–1871). Kōno Bairei was among his fellow students. Just prior to the fall of the shogunate, Gyokushō went to Edo to begin his career as a professional artist. Like many of his contemporaries, Gyokushō took an interest in Western techniques of sketching and drawing; he studied for a period with Charles Wirgman (1832–1891), a British artist-correspondent living in Yokohama who was a contributor to the *London Illustrated News*. To supplement his income, Wirgman taught a number of young Japanese artists who went on to have important careers; among them were the print designer Kobayashi Kiyochika (1847–1915) and the *yōga* painter Takahashi Yuichi (1828–1894).

Gyokushō kept his allegiance to the *Nihonga* tradition despite his experiments with Western art. By the mid-1870s, he was sufficiently well known to receive a commission from the wealthy Mitsui family, which began a long and profitable association between the two. In 1877, Gyokushō's house, along with most of his books, copybooks, and other belongings, burned. Only one copybook escaped destruction. After realizing that he no longer had copybooks to rely on, Gyokushō was forced to compose his own pictures, a bothersome task at first. Ironically, this may have been the beginning of his art.

Gyokushō won a number of awards in early art exhibitions, including the first and second Domestic Industrial Exposition (*Naikoku kangyō hakurankai*) in 1877 and 1881; and the first and second Domestic Painting Competitive Exhibition (*Naikoku kaiga kyōshinkai*) in 1882 and 1884. Recognized as a leading figure in Tokyo art circles, he was made a judge for the Eastern Painting Competitive Exhibition (*Tōyō kaiga kyōshinkai*) in 1886 and selected to paint the cedar doors for the new Imperial Palace in 1888. Gyokushō was an influential teacher, opening his first *juku*, Tenshindō, around

1881; he was then invited in 1889 to teach at the newly created Tokyo School of Fine Arts (Tokyo Bijutsu Gakkō), where he taught until 1912. Toward the end of his life, he founded the Kawabata Painting School (Kawabata Gagakkō), building the facilities on his own land in 1909.

Gyokushō and Hashimoto Gahō, his fellow *Nihonga* professor at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts, have often been compared in terms of their place in the history of Japanese art, their tastes, and their personalities. Gahō was considered to be more serious, a man of few words, a painter with a slow, careful style. Gyokushō, on the other hand, was taken to be a faster painter, with a lighter personality and a direct manner. Gyokushō freely spoke his mind. There are stories about the time Gyokushō and Okakura Tenshin travelled Japan together looking for artworks. Problems arose when Gyokushō would see something he did not like, because he would say so out loud, much to the owner's chagrin. Tenshin convinced Gyokushō that he must keep silent if he did not like a work, but all too often he would forget, embarrassing everyone.

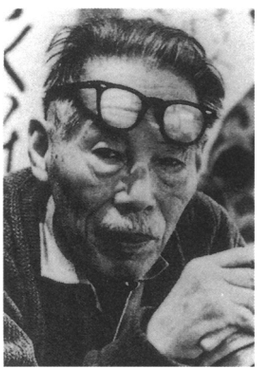
Gyokushō always felt that *shasei*, or sketching from life, was an important part of art. He told his students that "most people think that once something is sketched, there is no need for doing it a second time, but there are no two flowers that are alike in the world. [Whatever the subject], it always appears as something new to my eyes." Like many other teachers, however, he also gave his pupils model drawings to copy as part of their learning process. Further, Gyokushō saw a distinction between sketching from life and creating a painting, a view also held by Kawanabe Kyōsai and others.

"Mountains and rivers do not change their shapes in a year or two," he once wrote, "but trees and other vegetation do." Art, therefore, requires a selection; what is arbitrary and ugly must be removed. "True *shasei* results from taking out things and adding things to what actually exists in nature." Art for Gyokushō was more than mere copying; by the same token, however, art could not be created without a close study of nature. Tradition and observation must be combined. "*Shasei* itself does not equal good painting. An artist must learn how to sketch from nature, then keep these beauties in his heart so that he can make use of what he has learned in his painting." After all, Gyokushō believed that the ultimate foundation of painting was in *shai*, or capturing the essence.

Gyokushō was active at a time when traditional styles were in a process of consolidation that would result in the modern traditions of *Nihonga*. He believed that, while certain elements of Western-style painting might be useful to the development of a genuinely contemporary *Nihonga*, the basis for *Nihonga* must continue to find itself in the classic arts of Japan and China. The early Chinese art, he indicated, had intimate connections with the art of India, which in turn was linked to the ancient art of Europe. "If you trace this chain and so study Europe and contemporary European art, you will have made a real connection with the art of our country." Fanciful or not, these genealogies show Gyokushō's interest in maintaining what he found creative in the traditions he first learned during the Tokugawa period. For him, the modern spectator, untrained in connoisseurship, would naturally find an easy appeal in works based on techniques of "sketching from nature"; such was the reason why, in his view, the art of Hokusai continued to be popular. "As one's eyes are trained, however, it is the medieval ink painter Sesshū one comes to love." For many artists in Gyokushō's generation, the past continued to inform and uplift the present.

(Brenda G. Jordan and Hiroshi Nara)

Kawabata Ryūshi, 1885–1966
川端 龍子



Kawabata Ryūshi never received a formal education in *Nihonga* in his life. In defiance of his father, who had not legalized his relationship to Ryūshi's mother and neglected her and her child, he devised for himself the artist name Ryūshi (which literally means "Dragon's Child"), saying that he was not born of his parents but from a dragon. He appeared suddenly and left behind him many innovations. However, because of the role he played during the war, his contributions have yet to be studied thoroughly by postwar scholars.

Ryūshi was born in Wakayama to a family that had originally been involved in the kimono business. When Ryūshi was still a small child, however, his father failed in the business and his family came to Tokyo in 1895. Wishing to become a *yōga* painter since his childhood, Ryūshi tried to go to the United States, but was unsuccessful. Instead, in 1904, he entered the Aoibashi *Yōga* Institute (Aoibashi Yōga Kenkyūjo) run by Hakuba-kai, the art organization established by the leading *yōga* painters Kuroda Seiki (1866–1924) and Kume Keiichirō (1866–1934) in 1896. In 1906, he transferred to the Pacific Painting Society's Institute (Taiheiyō Gakai Kenkyūjo), a *yōga* school established in 1904, but soon left because he needed to support the family.

While copying cartoons from foreign magazines in order to make a living, Ryūshi developed a talent as an illustrator. By 1906, he began to contribute illustrations to comic magazines such as *Tokyo Puck*; in 1907, he was employed by *Kokumin shinbun* (People's Newspaper). His meeting with Hirafuku Hyakusui, who was also working for *Kokumin shinbun* to support himself, partly prompted Ryūshi's turn to *Nihonga*.

Ryūshi the oil painter had some success: his pointillist works modelled after Impressionist works he had seen in magazine reproductions were accepted to the 1907 Tokyo Industrial Exposition (*Tokyo kangyō hakurankai*) and the first and second Bunten in 1907 and 1908. His 1908 submission, *Farewell Forever* (Tokoshie ni saraba), depicting a sailor who decided to stay aboard a sinking ship, showed Ryūshi's penchant for heroism that would later characterize his *Nihonga* works.

In 1912, Ryūshi was finally able to visit the United States with the intention to earn enough money to travel to Europe. Unable to find a job, however, he spent only half a year visiting San Francisco, New York, and Boston. Yet two things he saw in Boston determined his future. One was Puvis de Chavannes's murals at the Boston Public Library which overwhelmed Ryūshi with their sheer size and decorativeness. The other was the collection of Japanese art at Boston's Museum of Fine Arts, which opened Ryūshi's eyes to the art of his own country and caused him to turn finally to *Nihonga*.

Upon his return to Japan, Ryūshi made a promising new start: his first *Nihonga* submission, *Tourists* (Kankōkyaku), was accepted to the Taishō Exposition (*Taishō hakurankai*) in 1914. A year later, *Fox's Path* (Kitsune no michi) was accepted to the second exhibition of the Reorganized Japan Art Institute (Saikō Nihon Bijutsu-in); he won the Chogyū award at the third exhibition with *History of Miraculous Spring* (Reisen no yurai); and after *Handscroll of the Gods' Battle* (Shinsen no maki) was accepted to the fourth exhibition he was made a full member of the Institute. This prompted him to quit illustration work and concentrate on his painting career. From 1918 to 1925, Ryūshi's works shown at the Institute's annual exhibition indicated his remarkable technical development as a *Nihonga* painter, especially in the realistic depiction of nature. His works from this period reveal a bold decorative quality and two-dimensionality, with the entire surface

of pictures covered by saturated colors.

In 1926, *Homage to an Ascetic's Deeds* (Shito shogyō san) was a sensational success with its depiction of the legendary monk En-no-Ozuno, that culminated Ryūshi's interest in myths and the supernatural since the *Handscroll of the Gods' Battle*. His dynamic lines that freely and boldly sprawled on the gigantic-scale picture became his signature style, perhaps owing considerably to the drawing skills he had developed during his illustrator period. His energetic style, however, increasingly alienated other members, leading Ryūshi to leave the Institute in 1928.

In the following year, Ryūshi established Seiryū-sha (literally, Blue Dragon Society) as a study group and exhibition society, holding their first exhibition in Ueno. With *Naruto*, 1929 shown at this exhibition, Ryūshi masterfully blended realism and decorativeness and won a favorable reception. The second exhibition in 1930 included his *Flaming Grasses* (Sōen), a work of several shades of gold wash on a deep blue background, which won the Asahi Prize the following year. While learning from traditional styles such as Rinpa and Buddhist paintings, he sought to imbue his works with a symbolic or narrative meaning.

At Seiryū-sha, Ryūshi advocated "art for the exhibition halls" (*kaijō geijutsu*), aspiring to create *Nihonga* that could be appreciated as a pure art in the environment of the exhibition. Considering that traditional "art for alcoves" (*tokonoma geijutsu*) fostered a rarified relationship between a work of art and a viewer, Ryūshi thought it necessary to create a different type of art, one that could form a new relationship with the public. Fond of the heroic and powerful—though never disregarding realism—Ryūshi sought out subject matter that would best bring out the beauty of the female and male nude. Significantly, such explorations by Ryūshi took place as the nation anxiously awaited the coming of the Pacific War. When Japan was constructing battleships to protect the South Sea Islands which came under her control after World War I, Ryūshi created the four works of the *Pacific Sea Series* (Taiheiyō rensaku), 1933–1936. When the Japanese military expanded its war efforts on the Chinese continent, he visited China and painted the four works of the *Continental Strategy Series* (Tairiku-saku rensaku), 1937–1940. *Xianglu Feng Mountains* (Kōrohō) from this series shows a fighter plane with the same name in full view, creating an image of the plane's speedy circular movement. After having been shown piecemeal at Seiryū-sha's annual exhibitions, these works—which constituted a new frontier of *Nihonga*—were exhibited at the Takashimaya Department Store under the sponsorship of the Imperial Rule Assistance Association (Taisei Yokusankai).

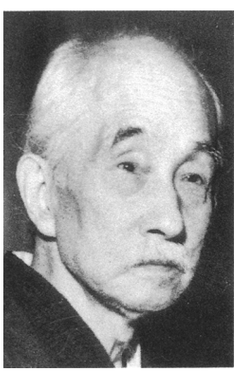
Toward the war's end, Ryūshi was struck by several family tragedies, losing his wife, and then his third son at the Southern Front. The last series Ryūshi undertook before the end of the war, *Southern Episode Series* (Nanpō-hen rensaku), predominantly expressed sorrow and lamentation.

After the war, Ryūshi made numerous pilgrimages to the Shikoku island and the western region (Saigoku). He also produced many narrative paintings on *kappa*, or the water imp. Notable during this period is *The Golden Pavilion in Flames*, 1950 (Plate 131), which was based on a newspaper photograph of the infamous fire. This work symbolically reflected the deep sense of loss many Japanese people felt.

Ryūshi's Seiryū-sha trained and sent forth many important artists, including Yokoyama Misao. Yet, the artist Ryūshi declared, "I will take Seiryū-sha to my grave." Following these words, Seiryū-sha was closed after his death in 1966.

(Kojima Kaoru)

Kawai Gyokudō, 1873–1957
川合 玉堂



Kawai Gyokudō is said to have found the golden mean in painting. He not only fused Eastern and Western pictorial devices, but he was also able to synthesize Kyoto and Tokyo styles while combining radical and conservative modes. Gyokudō's neutrality was unusual in the factious art world of the Meiji and Taishō periods, in which artistic groups were identified according to geographical and generational dichotomies. Gyokudō was later criticized for being old-fashioned and academic, and near the end of his life he was dismissed for having led a life of compromise. However, his continuing artistic development speaks of a lifelong quest for a private, yet accessible vision of painting. Gyokudō's poetically pastoral landscapes of Japan were often said to epitomize the idyllic Japanese relationship to nature. Much of Gyokudō's popularity during his lifetime may have been due to the way these images, rendered with a hybrid mixture of techniques, were able to capture the emotive longing of the period with a perfect stylistic amalgamation.

Gyokudō was a late-born child of a wealthy landowner in a small village in Aichi Prefecture. His father preoccupied himself with cultivating orchids, raising carp, writing *haiku*, and practicing the tea ceremony. When Gyokudō was eight, his family was forced to sell their property and move to Gifu where they set up an art supply shop, selling paper, ink, and brushes. Gyokudō's mother, a samurai's daughter, managed the store, while his father continued his cultured pursuits. Gyokudō attributed his love of nature to the mountain hikes he often took with his father.

By the time he was in his teens, Gyokudō was known locally for his art; his paintings of cormorant fishing were especially popular. With the interest of Aoki Senkyō, a well-known Kyoto calligrapher who had taken note of Gyokudō's artistic ability, and the sympathy of his mother who did not want her son to be a "merchant," Gyokudō's father reluctantly agreed to let his only child study art. Thus at age fifteen, Gyokudō presented Senkyō's letter of introduction to the Kyoto painter Mochizuki Gyokusen (1834–1913). Beginning his lessons by copying simple motifs from modelbooks (*funpon*), he later recalled longing to progress to landscapes.

In 1890, Gyokudō received an honorable mention at the third Domestic Industrial Exposition (*Naikoku kangyō hakurankai*); this success was his first taste of publicity and removed his father's reservations about his son's desire to be an artist. Later that year, Gyokudō became a student of Kōno Bairei and joined Taiseigi-kai, a group formed by Bairei's students. Gyokudō and his colleagues supplemented their required exercises by copying Western lithographs—a practice which may possibly have become the foundation for Gyokudō's Westernized sense of composition. During this time, Gyokudō began to go on lengthy sketching tours of the countryside, a habit which was to remain an essential part of his identity as an artist throughout his life.

The first half of the 1890s was filled with personal tragedies for Gyokudō: his father died in 1891, followed by his mother two years later; his teacher Bairei died in February 1895. Although he was doing well at exhibitions, including those sponsored by the Japan Young Painters' Association (Nihon Seinen Kaiga Kyōkai) in Kyoto and the Japan Art Association (Nihon Bijutsu Kyōkai) in Tokyo, he began to feel rootless. In April 1895, at the fourth Domestic Industrial Exposition held in Kyoto, Gyokudō saw Hashimoto Gahō's works, one of which had received first prize there. He recalled later that it was "the feeling of being hit with a path of dazzling light [causing in me] a violent shock beyond the power of brush and paper...." If such a great master were living in the present age, he felt he had to go study with him. The

next year, the members of the Japan Young Painters' Association saw Gyokudō off for a new life in Tokyo.

Gyokudō's move to Tokyo was the source of his particular amalgamation of the Kyoto and Tokyo techniques, which mixed Maruyama-Shijō naturalism with the new "idealism" of the Kanō school advanced by Gahō. While the Kanō-school emphasis on line was gradually losing its influence in Tokyo, Gyokudō considered line to be the staple of painting and worked his interpretation of it into the soft harmonies of color he had learned to achieve from his Kyoto training. Integrating this line into his Western compositions and Kyoto coloration, Gyokudō achieved a mature style in landscape—whether depicting a waterwheel in the rain, farmhouses in the snow, or boats in a rushing river—that was characterized by a pictorial manner that could arouse a sense of familiarity, nostalgia, and a host of other associative values.

As he created a synthesis in his paintings, Gyokudō seems to have acted as a mediator between the Kyoto and Tokyo art worlds as well as the so-called New and Old Factions (*Shinpa* and *Kyūha*, respectively) in Tokyo. While Gahō was alive, Gyokudō allied himself with the New Faction and the Japan Art Institute (Nihon Bijutsu-in), with which he had exhibited since its formation in 1898. He remained with the government-sponsored Bunten in 1914, even after the Institute members had left it.

Gyokudō was one of the pillars of the art establishment. Named as a judge of the first Bunten in 1907, Gyokudō served as a judge at the government-sponsored exhibitions for most of his life; he was appointed an Imperial Household Artist (*Teishitsu gigeiin*) in 1917 and made a member of the Imperial Academy of Fine Arts (Teikoku Bijutsu-in) in 1919. His duties as an official artist extended to Manchuria and Korea, where he juried the first Korean Art Exhibition (*Chōsen bijutsu tenrankai*) in 1922. He received cultural medals from France and Italy in 1931, and the Order of Cultural Merit (*Bunka kunshō*) in 1940. He was designated as a Person of Cultural Merit (*Bunka kōrōsha*) in 1951. Teaching at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts from 1915 to 1938, his students included many prominent *Nihonga* artists.

In 1944 Gyokudō retired to Mitake, an area in the upper reaches of the Tama River which he first visited on a sketching trip in 1900, and devoted himself to painting. He put a sign in his entrance hall stating "Not at home in the morning," taken from a longer poem expressing his annoyance at the intrusion of visitors from the city. A poet throughout his life and especially adept at *haiku*, Gyokudō's late landscapes were marked by a brevity and looseness that can be likened to visual *haiku*. Gyokudō, presenting his vision of the idyllic Japanese countryside at his retreat in Mitake, became one of the most appealing Japanese artists of this century. When he died in 1957, Kaburaki Kiyokata said he felt as if the mountains and rivers of Japan, indeed, Japanese landscape itself, had died.

(Miriam Wattles)

Kawanabe Kyōsai, 1831–1889
河鍋 暁斎



Among the most versatile and talented artists of the late nineteenth century, Kyōsai reveals in his work the virtuoso techniques available to artists trained in traditional methods. Well known in Europe during his lifetime, he was appreciated by Japanese and Westerners alike. Kyōsai became appreciated for his lively painting style, weird and fantastic subject matter, his drinking, and tall tales. His oeuvre covers a range of sizes, formats, subjects and stylistic traditions of Japanese painting and printmaking. Particularly gifted in technical skill that he used in an individualistic manner, Kyōsai had a creative approach to producing new twists on traditional subjects. At the same time, he stressed the practice of *shasei*, or study from life, by which he meant firsthand observation of things in nature in conjunction with sketching from life. For him, this was paramount for a painter.

A year after Kyōsai was born, his father, a lower-ranking samurai in Koga (present-day Ibaraki Prefecture), took the family to Edo, where he purchased the right to become a firefighter for the Tokugawa government, thereby enhancing his samurai status. Kyōsai displayed an interest in drawing from life at an early age and became a pupil of the *ukiyo-e* artist Utagawa Kuniyoshi (1797–1861) at age six. After about two years, Kyōsai was taken out of Kuniyoshi's studio and began to study with a Kanō painter. In 1841, he was accepted into the Surugadai Kanō academy, which generally only accepted those who were of samurai status. Kyōsai proceeded through the course of study rapidly and completed his training at the age of eighteen. He received a Kanō name and worked as an official Kanō artist for a few years, until he separated from the Kanō school in 1852. Although he maintained pride in his Kanō training and some connections with the Surugadai branch of the Kanō family throughout his life, he pursued the rest of his career as an independent artist.

During his life, Kyōsai came into contact with a vast array of people. He collaborated with the author Kanagaki Robun (1829–1894) on early satirical *manga*; advised Ernest Fenollosa and others on connoisseurship; produced theater curtains for the Kabuki theater Shintomiza during its progressive era; and took the English architect Josiah Conder (1852–1920) as a pupil. He was acquainted with artists such as Kikuchi Yōsai (1788–1878) and writers such as Mantei Ōga (1819–1890), as well as Émile Guimet (1836–1918) and Mortimer Menpes (1860–1938), painter and author of *Whistler as I Knew Him* (1904).

In 1870 Kyōsai was imprisoned and beaten for painting satirical drawings while inebriated at a painting and calligraphy meeting in Ueno. This increased his popularity and his reputation as an eccentric with the public, but officials of the Meiji government were not as impressed. In 1881, officials criticized him for charging the vast sum of 100 yen for his prize-winning painting of a crow at the second Domestic Industrial Exposition (*Naikoku kangyō hakurankai*), and noted their criticism again on the certificate he received with his prize. Negative criticisms of Kyōsai for caricature sketches and other "low" art persisted long after his death; this, in conjunction with his drinking, eccentric work habits, and outrageous tales about his life, contributed to the subsequent relegation of his name to a shadowed corner of Japanese art history.

Kyōsai's reputation and his creation of *giga* (caricature sketches) and *kyōga* (satirical caricature sketches) overshadowed his dedication to his art. In fact, he was actively involved in many of the art-world events in the early Meiji era. He exhibited in early domestic expositions and participated in the first Domestic Painting Competitive Exhibition in 1882 as well as the first and second Japanese Art Exhibitions in Paris (*Pari Nihon bijutsu jūrankai*) in 1883 and 1884. He also contributed some works from his own collections to the Exhibitions of Old Art (*Kanko bijutsukai*) in 1880, 1881, and 1882.

His autobiography/painting manual, *Kyōsai on Painting*, 1887 (Plate 7), provides us with many insights into Kyōsai the artist. Kyōsai taught that *shasei*, or sketching from life, "is the foundation and the essentials of brush technique are the embellishment. When foundation and embellishment are [both] present, one will for the first time reach the level of the masters." He did not believe that *shasei* alone constituted a work of art; indeed it must be balanced by

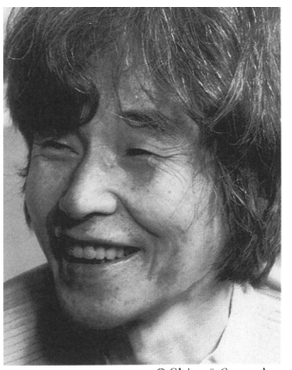
considerations of artistic form. However, he selectively incorporated certain elements—foreshortening, for example—while handling others more cursorily—such as single-point perspective. The study of "old and new masters" of various schools and styles of painting—Chinese, Western, or Japanese—was also important to his practice and teachings, and *Kyōsai on Painting* served as a kind of copybook for students. In this respect, Kyōsai's broad approach to the study of different artistic styles foreshadowed the variety found in the curriculum of art schools such as the Tokyo School of Fine Art (Tokyo Bijutsu Gakkō).

Kyōsai's work often has a deceptively traditional appearance. He did work within certain traditional boundaries, one of which, however, was the practice of interjecting something new into the old. Kyōsai characteristically exhibited a sensibility, often found in *ukiyo-e*, of creating fresh angles on established themes, varying conventional treatments of subjects, and interjecting interesting new twists. This enabled him to use images of modern Japan such as hats, rickshas, telephone poles, and trains and to employ Western art techniques such as foreshortening, highlighting, and shading, while maintaining Japanese design, color, line, and other formal elements.

Opening the way for new possibilities, including individual artistic expression was very important to Kyōsai. He wrote that, "the most important part of this book [*Kyōsai on Painting*] is to show to beginners of the younger generation the style of famous masters of past and present, and, in addition, to cause the development of their own technique, ultimately causing them to master a skill which surpasses the men of old." This idea went hand in hand with artistic versatility. Again, in *Kyōsai on Painting*, his philosophy was explained: "If the painting specialist cannot duplicate [*shasei*] the form of things he sees, no matter what it is, then he cannot be said to be a painting specialist.... All of [my] teachings were from drawing [things] just as they are." Kyōsai thus encouraged his students to take advantage of the variety of resources at their disposal, to experience their world firsthand through *shasei*, and to make use of both their artistic heritage and whatever the modern world had to offer as well.

(Brenda G. Jordan)

Kayama Matazō, b.1927
加山 又造



© Shigyō Suenobu

Kayama Matazō is the son of a Nishijin clothing designer and the grandson of a Kanō-school painter. He first studied painting at the Kyoto Municipal School of Arts and Crafts. After his graduation in 1944, he advanced to the *Nihonga* department at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts and completed his education in 1949 in spite of a brief interruption during the war. Kayama studied with Yamamoto Kyūjin, one of the founders of the important postwar group called Creative Art (Sōzō Bijutsu). He began winning awards soon after his artistic debut; from the 1950s his paintings revealed his interest in animal motifs as well as certain influences from Surrealism and Cubism.

In the late 1950s, Kayama began to study the ancient art of cut gold leaf (*kirikane*) and drew inspiration from the Rinpa school. He then exploited these techniques, so redolent of the refined sensibilities of classical Japanese art, in the format of large-scale paintings and screens (Plate 171). A number of his works created in the mid-1960s refer back to themes and styles found in the great Japanese decorative arts of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Kayama's attraction to such stylization, the artist says, is related to the fact that "the most important feature of Japanese art lies in its unique conception of the decorative, one which enables the artist to thoroughly sublimate the subject matter so as to express only the purest of those essences that result from the process itself." ("Decorative" in these contexts refers to Japanese art that emphasizes color, shape, design and other formal elements, although traditionally this type of art was also heavily imbued with layers of literary or emotional meaning.)

Over the years, his versatility as an artist has led Kayama to undertake printmaking, pottery, jewelry design, and designs for airplane interiors. Whatever the medium he has chosen, he has maintained his concern with the meaning of traditional Japanese painting in the modern world. Although he has taken advantage of certain modern Western techniques such as modeling, Kayama nevertheless has felt that there is a certain freedom in Japanese painting, "the freedom of viewing things from infinity." This enigmatic remark has been interpreted to refer to such elements as the free shifting of viewpoints, the use of blank space, and the symbolic and decorative aspects (design, color, pattern, and so forth) of traditional Japanese painting. Kayama has also made use of these features when he has portrayed feminine beauty in his paintings of nudes, beginning in 1974. Of one such painting the artist has stated that the nude figure was neither a "real human being nor a real woman. She is a 'reality' of beauty transcending all such earthly considerations."

In the late 1970s, Kayama began a series of ink paintings. This time, the models he sought in the history of Japanese art were the Muromachi painter Sesshū (1420–1506) and the Tokugawa-era painters Hasegawa Tōhaku (1539–1610) and Tawaraya Sōtatsu (d.1643?) who in his eyes attained uniquely Japanese characteristics in painting, transforming the spirituality of classical Chinese ink painting into highly lyrical and graceful decorativeness (Figure 7.13).

Kayama, who is acknowledged as one of the foremost *Nihonga* painters of the postwar years, believes that "*Nihonga* is not a mere pictorial form as contrasted to Western painting nor is it a medium in which to seek universality in pictorial art. For me, *Nihonga* is painting itself; it is the one and only pictorial form."

(Brenda G. Jordan and Hiroshi Nara)

Kikuchi Keigetsu, 1879–1955
菊池 契月



Tsuchida Bakusen once described his friend Kikuchi Keigetsu as a "typical *Shinshū-jin*, (person from Nagano Prefecture), seemingly introverted but actually tenacious, stubborn, and uncompromising." His introspective artistic temperament surfaced most strongly in his figure paintings from the Shōwa period, for which he is best known today. Carefully executed with a resilient line combined with the most stringent use of color, Keigetsu's work

imparts an air of cool elegance. The aesthetic sensibility expressed in his mature work sets him apart from artists of the Kyoto Painting Circle (*Kyoto gadan*) that derived from the Maruyama-Shijō tradition and aligns him with the so-called "neo-classicism" (*shin-koten-shugi*) of Tokyo, most notably represented by the work of Yasuda Yukihiko.

The son of a village official in Nagano Prefecture, Keigetsu became a pupil of Kodama Katei, a *bunjin-ga* specialist, in 1892. Four years later, Keigetsu moved to Kyoto to study painting. After a brief study with Utsumi Kichidō (1850–1925), he became a pupil of Kikuchi Hōbun (1862–1918), an influential master along with Takeuchi Seihō and Yamamoto Shunkyo. Once in Hōbun's *juku*, Keigetsu immediately began to make himself known, steadily winning awards at the Exhibition of New and Old Art (*Shinko bijutsuhin ten*) in Kyoto. Eventually, in 1906, Hōbun asked Keigetsu to marry his daughter and carry the name of the Kikuchi family. Keigetsu's paintings from the late-Meiji years demonstrate his focused interest in the naturalistic representation of historical themes.

Keigetsu's oeuvre from the Taishō period presents an astonishing variety. Paintings range in subject and style from realist themes drawn from contemporary life, to a highly decorative Rinpa-inspired representation of the fairy-tale world, to romantic expressions in the bird-and-flower genre. A direct stimulus was his invigorating experience at the Kyoto Municipal Special School of Painting (Kyoto Shiritsu Kaiga Senmon Gakkō), where he had begun teaching as Hōbun's assistant in 1910. At the school, Keigetsu was surrounded by such prominent artists as Takeuchi Seihō and Yamamoto Shunkyo. Moreover, inspired by the teachings of the young art historian, Nakai Sōtarō (1879–1966), Keigetsu eagerly attended the classes in art history and anatomy with his own students. During this period Keigetsu firmly established himself in the official art world: after the Bunten was instituted in 1907, Keigetsu became one of the star painters, consistently winning awards. From 1918 onwards, he was frequently appointed as a judge for the Bunten and Teiten.

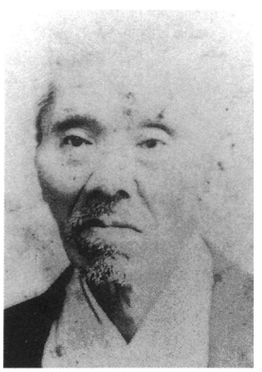
The turning point in Keigetsu's art came after 1922–1923 when he travelled to Europe for a year with his colleagues Nakai Sōtarō and Irie Hakō. His admiration of early Renaissance painting and Egyptian sculpture led him to investigate the past artistic traditions in Japan such as Nara and Heian painting and *ukiyo-e* figures. His exposure to the tradition of Western portraiture inspired Keigetsu to represent historical personages. Many of his works from the 1930s and 1940s depict military heroes as in *Welcoming the Imperial Carriage*, 1943 (Plate 139), echoing the intense nationalism in Japan at the time. One also finds refreshing images of contemporary young women in the genre of *bijin-ga*. Whether *bijin* or samurai, historical or unknown, Keigetsu conceived and depicted each figure in an earnest manner.

In politics as well as art, Keigetsu remained outside the Kyoto Painting Circle under Seihō's influence. During the 1935–1936 upheaval involving the reform of Teiten, Keigetsu was one of the few Kyoto artists who did not follow Seihō. The anguish and difficulties he experienced through this period caused him to gradually detach himself from *kanten*, or the government-sponsored exhibitions, altogether. In the 1930s, Keigetsu increasingly channelled his energies to private exhibitions organized by department stores or his own *juku*. After 1940, he ceased to participate in *kanten* almost entirely.

Always austere, Keigetsu once criticized his own Taishō paintings as "too sentimental." During the final decade of his life, however, Keigetsu wished to move beyond the cerebral approach which had often resulted in technically perfect but emotionally aloof expression in his early-Shōwa work. In particular, he admired the buoyant style of Tomioka Tessai's late works; even more, he yearned for Tessai's unconstrained state of mind.

(Michiyo Morioka)

Kishi Chikudō, 1826–1897
岸 竹堂



Kishi Chikudō was the fourth-generation head of the Kishi school in Kyoto, which had originated with Ganku (1756–1838). In his life time, Chikudō, Mori Kansai, and Kōno Bairei were regarded as the three great painters of Kyoto. While many Kyoto artists were busy adopting the *bunjin-ga* style that was then in vogue, Chikudō sought inspiration for his work in Western-style painting. His budding sense of individualism and a penchant for realism make Chikudō an important figure in the development of *Nihonga* in the first half of the Meiji period.

Born to a samurai family of the Hikone clan, Chikudō first became a pupil of Nakajima Antai (fl.1830s–1840s), the clan's official painter and Kanō master, in 1836; in 1842 he moved to Kyoto to study with Kanō Eigaku (1790–1867). Dissatisfied, however, with Kanō's reliance on established modes, Chikudō moved on in 1843 to study with Kishi Renzan (1804–1859), the third-generation head of the Kishi school. In Kyoto, a quarter century before the Meiji Restoration, a painter's social status was largely determined by the type of patronage he acquired; close relationships with prominent aristocrats and temples conferred a high status, while a commission from the imperial family would further elevate the position of an artist and his school in the public eye. Within this system, it was paramount that the school's style be transmitted from one generation to the next. Chikudō stoically persevered through more than ten years of training as Renzan's *gakuboku* (student-servant) to prove his worthiness. In 1855, Chikudō worked with Renzan on the decoration of the reconstructed Kyoto Imperial Palace. His participation in this socially prestigious project indicates that he already held a position as a leading Kishi school artist, despite his young age. *Reputations of Kyoto Painters* (Heian gaka hyōban-ki), published around that time, describes Chikudō as a hard-working and accomplished artist of good reputation, while humorously pointing out the contrast between Chikudō's plain appearance and his attractive painting.

Chikudō's desire to develop an innovative, individual style of painting had been evident ever since he left the Kanō school. Even during his tenure under Renzan, he was often inclined to trust his own observation of nature rather than faithfully follow the traditionally accepted style. The decisive turning point came in 1864 when much of Kyoto was burnt to the ground. In the fire, Chikudō lost not only his fledgling inn business but all the model paintings and preparatory drawings that had been kept in the Kishi family since Ganku's time. Ironically, this disaster may, in fact, have released Chikudō from his dependence on the Kishi-school tradition and allowed him to follow more freely his own artistic instincts.

Chikudō's new style first emerged in the subject of tiger painting, long considered the Kishi-school specialty. For an 1867 imperial commission, Chikudō aspired to create an original representation of a tiger based on the actual study of the animal. To his disappointment, however, the officials expressed their preference for a more traditional rendition, such as those by Gantai (1782–1865), the second head of the Kishi school. Chikudō continued to work with this theme and during the last decade of his life created a series of masterpieces, best exemplified by *Tiger*, 1893 (Plate 26).

His intense involvement with this painting, which resulted in a highly convincing image, is believed to have caused Chikudō to have a temporary mental breakdown. Although the nature of his illness was not medically determined, the incident seems to have been a symbolic culmination of Chikudō's lifelong pursuit of realism.

Chikudō's encounter with Nishimura Sōzaemon, the owner of Chisō, one of Kyoto's most respected *yūzen* textile stores, was fortuitous for the traditional *yūzen* industry in Kyoto. Although lesser painters had worked for the *yūzen* industry before, Chikudō's alliance was remarkable because the prominent artist and the noted entrepreneur maintained an extremely close working relationship in order to exploit new potentials of the craft. In furnishing designs for new products for both export and domestic purposes, Chikudō opened the door for many other painters to work in this field: Mochizuki Gyokusen (1834–1913), Imao Keinen (1845–1924), and Kōno Bairei among his generation and younger artists such as Takeuchi Seihō, Tsuji Kakō, and Kikuchi Hōbun (1862–1918). Their contribution in turn stimulated the textile artisans to train in *Nihonga* to improve their painterly skills and sense of design.

Working for Nishimura Sōzaemon had a significant consequence for Chikudō's art. It is widely believed that after seeing paintings illustrated in foreign magazines at Chisō, Chikudō seriously began investigating the Western principle of perspective. His landscape masterpiece, *Scenes of Ōtsu and Karasaki* (Ōtsu/Karasaki zu), 1876 (Figure 2.4) for which Chikudō prepared numerous sketches at the actual site, demonstrates how he employed Western perspective in a low horizon and convincing sense of deep space. Chikudō's accomplishments in this work, and in his later *View of Higashiyama*, 1896 (Plate 32), anticipate Takeuchi Seihō's paintings of Western landscape after his return from Europe in 1901. With regard to Western art, Chikudō commented late in his life: "Today it is hard to distinguish Kanō from Tosa, and so forth, because no one adheres to just one style and everything seems to have merged together. It is the same thing with Western painting. If one were to digest it really well... as someone with a strong stomach can eat anything without getting sick, one can adopt Western painting techniques without making his paintings smell like the West." With a strong sense of self-identity, Chikudō adopted from Western art only that which he believed was useful in creating an individual expression.

Chikudō had a genial personality and was greatly respected by other painters in Kyoto. It was Chikudō, Takeuchi Seihō recalled, whom he admired most among his predecessors. Besides his achievement in landscape and tiger paintings, Chikudō was renowned for his skillful depictions of cherry blossoms and a wide variety of animals. His late paintings often represent a synthesis of realism and lyricism that conveys a feeling of melancholy and quietude, especially in his fondness for moonlit scenes. Among many examples of this theme, *The Moon Emerging from Maruyama*, c.1897 (Plate 33), created in the final years of Chikudō's life, is most striking. The literal description of the scene suggested by Chikudō's inscription on the painting, "Maruyama Spitting Out the Moon," is matched by an amazing visual representation whose focus is firmly on the magnificent moon. Mesmerizing and evocative, such a work demonstrates his superb sense of inventiveness and ingenuity.

(Michiyo Morioka)

Kitano Tsunetomi, 1880–1947
北野 恒富



Kitano Tsunetomi "loved women just as he loved flowers," recalled his granddaughter. For his portrayal of seductive women, he was once compared to Ihara Saikaku (1642–1693), a great Osaka novelist who wrote stories of amorous women. One of the celebrated *bijin-ga* painters in modern *Nihonga*, Tsunetomi was regarded as the leading master of the Osaka art world in his lifetime. Yet many aspects of his early development as an artist, his relations with Kyoto painters, and the role he played in nurturing the following generation of Osaka artists have remained obscure.

Born in Kanazawa, the "little Kyoto" facing the Japan Sea, Tsunetomi apprenticed at local wood-block printing shops between 1892 and 1895. He worked for Nakayama Komatarō, a wood-block carver in 1897 but moved to Osaka the next year to study with Ineno Toshitsune, a former pupil of Mizuno Toshikata. In 1899, around the time he started publishing his illustrations in the monthly paper *Shin-Nihon* (New Japan), he also began studying *yōga*. Tsunetomi was possibly involved in the *yōga* circles in Kyoto: while his involvement with the Heigo Painting Society (Heigo Gakai), a group of Kyoto *Nihonga* painters who studied *yōga* under the influential oil painter Asai Chū (1856–1907), is not certain, it is known that he participated in the 1912 exhibition of Le Masque, an assembly of younger Kyoto painters both in *Nihonga* and *yōga* that included Tsuchida Bakusen and Ono Chikkyō. The sense of realism achieved in his early works demonstrates his understanding of the styles and techniques of oil painting.

Working as a successful newspaper illustrator, Tsunetomi emerged as an innovative *bijin-ga* artist toward the very end of the Meiji period. During the early Taishō, he became known for his paintings of geisha and courtesans in the lineage of *ukiyo-e*, as represented by *Feeling Warm*, 1915 (Plate 78). Tsunetomi's women openly project an erotic power and a vulnerability. His 1913 work based on *The Love Suicides at Amijima* (Shinjū Ten no Amijima, 1721) by the Osaka playwright Chikamatsu Monzaemon (1653–1724), "extremely suggestive," in the painter's own words, was rejected by the government-sponsored Bunten. Kaburaki Kiyokata, while characterizing his own subjects as "women of the morning," described Tsunetomi's as "women of the night, embraced by the dark shadow of dissolute pleasures." In his portrayal of feminine sensuality as human reality and his attention to *yōga* figure style, Tsunetomi is clearly one of the forerunners of the Kyoto "decadents." Kainoshō Tadaoto (1894–1978), in particular, who was active at the exhibitions of the Association for the Creation of National Painting (Kokuga Sōsaku Kyōkai) in the 1920s, was to address more fully and resolutely both thematic and stylistic issues introduced in Tsunetomi's early paintings.

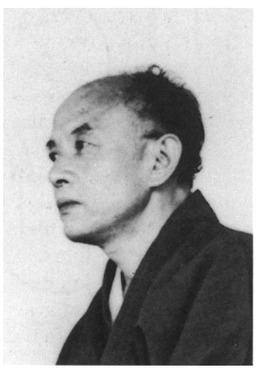
After Tsunetomi became a full member of the Japan Art Institute (Nihon Bijutsu-in) in 1917, his work significantly changed. *Lady Chacha*, 1921 (Plate 85), an imaginary portrait of a historical figure, imparts a sense of idealism both in theme and style and offers a striking contrast to his earlier work. Even in the representations of women typically derived from *ukiyo-e* themes, Tsunetomi focused on refinement and elegance rather than the lively human quality of his subjects. Many Kyoto artists voiced their concern and bewilderment: one in particular expressed his disappointment by saying that Tsunetomi's new style had lost its sensual charm and vigor, the very qualities which had defined his work as the product of an Osaka artist.

In time, Tsunetomi's painting reached a phase of maturity characterized by a new sense of balance and freedom. During the Shōwa period, when he regularly participated in the Institute's exhibitions, some of his works recapture a sense of vigor through bold composition and luxurious colors while others achieve an expression of thoughtful restraint.

Tsunetomi made a distinct contribution as the first *Nihonga* artist from Osaka to achieve national fame. His success and presence brought attention to Osaka as a modern artistic community for the first time. Themes from the earlier literary tradition and history of Osaka are evident in Tsunetomi's oeuvre, demonstrating his awareness of the unique regional culture. His *juku*, Hakuyō-sha, flourished during the 1920s and 1930s, nurturing many Osaka artists of the following generation, including Shima Seien (1892–1970) and Nakamura Teii (1900–1982).

(Michiyo Morioka)

Kobayashi Kokei, 1883–1957
小林 古径



Kobayashi Kokei was born in Niigata Prefecture to an official of the Niigata prefectural government. By age thirteen, Kokei lost both his parents as well as his elder brother. He moved in with relatives, spending most of his time alone, and grew up a serious and independent-minded young man.

Kokei used his inheritance to buy painting materials and pay for painting lessons. He first studied with Aoki Kōha, the Niigata artist and a former student of Matsumoto Fūko (1840–1923). In 1899, Kokei moved to Tokyo to live with his relative. He had initially intended to study with Fūko, but went to Kajita Hanko (1870–1917) instead. When Kokei joined Hanko's *juku*, the young teacher already had a considerable reputation as a history painter and book illustrator. Under Hanko, Kokei studied history and genre painting, first copying Kikuchi Yōsai's (1788–1878) *Ancient Wisdom and Old Customs* (Zenken kojitsu), a ten-volume compilation published in 1868 that became a standard reference work for history painters.

Already in 1899, one of Kokei's historical works was accepted in the seventh Joint Painting Competitive Exhibition of the Japan Painting Association and the Japan Art Institute (*Nihon Kaiga Kyōkai/Nihon Bijutsu-in rengō kaiga kyōshinkai*). Thereafter, his paintings were readily accepted in the Joint Painting Competitive Exhibitions and frequently won awards. During this time, Kokei met two men who would be important friends: Maeda Seison, who joined Hanko's *juku* 1901; and Yasuda Yukihiko, with whom Kokei came into contact in 1906.

In 1907 Kokei joined the Tatsumi Painting Society (Tatsumi Gakai), an art organization established in 1899 that included many pupils of Hanko and Fūko; and one of his works was accepted by the first Bunten and attracted a favorable attention. Through this time, Kokei was still under the strong influence of Hanko, in his treatment of facial expressions, supple but heavily modulated lines, and historical genre subjects.

In 1908, Kokei went to Nara to stay with another of Hanko's students. Intimate views of Nara's architecture and ancient artifacts would be incorporated in his later paintings. Two years later, around 1910, Yukihiko and Imamura Shikō invited Kokei to join their study group, Kōji-kai, which advocated the establishment of a new kind of *Nihonga*.

In addition to his participation in Kōji-kai, Kokei's meeting with Okakura Tenshin changed the course of his career. In 1908, the year Kokei's work was rejected by the Society for the Refinement of National Painting (Kokuga Gyokusei-kai), Yukihiko introduced him to Tenshin, the leader of the Japan Art Institute. Next year, with Tenshin's introduction, Kokei was commissioned to create an Edo-style genre painting by the prestigious Maeda family, who presented it at the 1910 Japan-British Exposition (*Nichi-Ei hakurankai*) in London. It is reported that while Kokei was working on the painting, Tenshin advised him not to limit himself to the sources in *ukiyo-e*, but to draw widely from the tradition of Japanese art. Furthermore, Tenshin was responsible for introducing Kokei, as well as Yukihiko, Shikō, and Seison to Hara Sankei (1868–1939), the great art patron of Yokohama, who provided them with financial support and enabled them to study classic Japanese art.

In 1912, at the sixth Bunten, Kokei received a certificate of merit for *A Well of Paradise* (Gokuraku no i), a solid, powerful composition of female figures rendered with characteristically unmodulated lines. A hint of Shikō's influence as well as Kokei's own study of Momoyama genre painting can be seen in his decorative treatment. Yet his spare and clean style and the static but tension-filled composition were already visible. In 1913, his mentor Tenshin died and Kōji-kai disbanded; but the following year Kokei participated in the reorganization of the Japan Art Institute and was made a full member along with Yukihiko and Seison.

After completing a handscroll inspired by the classic story of the *Tale of the Bamboo Cutter* (Taketori monogatari) in 1917 (Plate 52), which was marked by bold simplification, spare coloration, and lean sharp lines, Kokei began to move away from historical and literary subjects and concentrate more on contemporary scenes. *Threshing Grain*, 1919 (Plate 133) is a fine example of his new style.

In 1922, Kokei and Seison were sent to Europe by the Institute; they travelled throughout Italy and visited Paris, London, and Egypt (Figure 5.13). The trip lasted for approximately one year, nearly a month of which the two spent copying the British Museum's famous scroll *Admonitions of the Instructress*, attributed to the Chinese artist Gu Kaizhi (c.334–c.404). This extremely difficult project, aggravated by the dark, sooty environment of the museum, proved to be a very valuable and instructive experience for Kokei. Having learned both European and Eastern traditions of painting on this trip, Kokei created many memorable works, including two small works each entitled *Laundry Place*, 1926 (Plates 151 and 152) and *Weaving*, 1926 (Plate 134).

By 1930, when Kokei was made an administrator of the Institute, he, Seison, and Yukihiko firmly established themselves as its leading artists. At the same time, Kokei's career became more closely intertwined with the events in the official art world. He remained productive until the end of his life.

Kōno Bairei, 1844–1895
幸野 楳嶺



Although Bairei was a recognized artist who won many awards and important commissions, his posthumous reputation rests primarily on his accomplishments as an educator. For close to a quarter of a century he maintained one of the leading *juku* in Kyoto and trained some of the most distinguished artists of the next generation. He also played a signal role in the establishment of the Kyoto-Prefecture Painting School (Kyoto-fu Gagakkō) and numerous

other organizations, although his inflexible attitude and irascible temperament repeatedly resulted in his early resignation. Still, he never lacked patrons and they rewarded him with a splendid house where he spent his last years.

Bairei was the youngest of three sons of Yasuda Shirobei, one of the six licensed money-lenders of Kyoto. He was reared in comfort and well educated. As a young child, he was transferred to the register of his father's original family, the Kōno from Tsuruga in the northern part of Kyoto. He was only nine when he became a pupil of a leading Maruyama painter, Nakajima Raishō (1796–1871), and spent close to a decade studying alongside Kawabata Gyokushō. So precocious was he that he won a prize after only two months' study, and he was still in his teens when neighboring entrepreneurs sent their sons and artisans to study with him. A series of family tragedies including the death of his father and mother, the loss of their home during the great fire of 1864, and his brother's early retirement from the family profession on the eve of the Meiji Restoration required him to earn his own livelihood.

Bairei had impaired his relations with his teacher Raishō by marrying and quickly divorcing his daughter in 1867, so he waited until Raishō was about to expire before aligning himself with a major Shijō artist whom he thought could best advance his career. Since Bairei was already fully trained, Shiokawa Bunrin did not significantly influence his style of painting, but he did help him secure new sources of patronage and early recognition as a painter.

Bairei possessed the discipline, drive, and pragmatic cast of mind of the Meiji modernizers, whose goals he shared. He was convinced that art could contribute to the economy and culture of the nation. He had impressed Kyoto entrepreneurs with his ability to train craftsmen and had impressed government officials by the energy and resourcefulness with which he assisted Bunrin on his various projects. Bairei would thus seem to have been the ideal person to help government and industry tap the artistic talent of Kyoto and train the next generation of artists and artisans. He was one of a group of artists who proposed establishing the Kyoto-Prefecture Painting School (Kyoto-fu Gagakkō), the first formal art school in Japan to offer training in a variety of Japanese schools, including *nanga* and *yōga*. He was one of the first teachers, but resigned after a year because of differences with Tanomura Chokunyū (1814–1907) and Suzuki Shōnen (1848–1918). He returned in 1889, when Shōnen resigned, only to withdraw again a year later when he clashed with Tamura Sōryū (1846–1918). He nonetheless contributed greatly to the development of the school.

His private *juku*, the most important in Kyoto, boasted the greatest number of pupils, some of whom were already active during the 1870s. It flourished most especially during the 1880s when he numbered among his leading pupils Kikuchi Hōbun (1862–1918), Takeuchi Seihō, Taniguchi Kōkyō (1864–1915), and Tsuji Kakō, who succeeded him as the influential teachers and the leading artists of the next generation. A notoriously strict and demanding teacher, Bairei not only provided thorough training but helped form many of the institutions that enlarged opportunities for younger artists. In 1886, in conjunction with Kubota Beisen, he helped organize the Kyoto Young Painters' Study Group (Kyoto Seinen Kaiga Kenkyūkai). In 1890 he and Beisen succeeded in establishing the Kyoto Art Association (Kyoto Bijutsu Kyōkai), which they hoped would conduct a more vigorous program than that of the Joun-sha.

A gifted teacher but quite conventional artist, Bairei's handscroll of an outing to Lake Biwa in 1877 engagingly depicts the new railroad station in Kyoto and a train puffing its way towards Ōtsu. His *Fireworks over the River* (Fukusui enka zu) of the following year is stylistically attuned to the contemporary painting of Whistler (Figure 2.5). During this same period, Bairei explored the principles of Western art and produced a very creditable red chalk drawing of a young woman. Unfortunately none of these innovative early works can now be traced. The cedar doors that he painted for the new Imperial Palace in Tokyo in 1887 reveal the conservative trend evident in such official commissions. He received a major prize at the 1889 Paris Exposition and was commissioned that year to paint a pair of screens for Prince Heinrich of Austria. A self-conscious effort to impress a foreign audience is evident in *Farmer's House in Autumn* (Denka shūkei no zu), shown at the Chicago World's Fair in 1893.

Despite the apparent severity of his nature, Bairei was a convivial person with a wide circle of friends who shared his interests in Noh and *haiku*. His last work was a major commission from the Higashi Honganji temple which he barely managed to complete before his death. A small exhibition was held on the first anniversary of his death, and a major one was held at the Kyoto Exposition on the tenth anniversary of his death.

(Ellen P. Conant)

Kosugi Hōan (Misei), 1881–1964
小杉 放庵(未醒)



Kosugi Hōan, who shifted from caricature to oil painting before turning primarily to *Nihonga*, had divergent artistic personas. In retrospect, Hōan considered his life to have been one of a continuous path. If anything, for himself as well as others, Hōan sought individualism. In his twenties and early thirties, while he let Bohemianism mask his sensitive idealism, Hōan sought to liberate Japanese oil painting from the West so that it could express Eastern sensibilities. In the later part of his life, Hōan secluded himself in the mountains where, very much in the manner of the traditional *bunjin* (or literati) individualists, his brushwork grew more fluid while his essays, poems, and calligraphy exemplified a sophisticated artlessness.

The youngest son of six children of a shrine official within the Nikkō temple compound in Tochigi Prefecture, Hōan first studied Confucian and other classics with his father who was a nativist scholar of the Hirata school. At fourteen, he became the resident student of Ioki Bunsai (1863–1906), a friend of Hōan's father. Bunsai had studied oil painting under the prominent early Meiji artist Takahashi Yuichi (1828–1894) before withdrawing to the Nikkō area to devote himself to detailed renderings of alpine plants. Teaching him the basics of art by having him copy reproductions of Western masterworks, Bunsai helped Hōan form his sense of composition. Bunsai also treated Hōan as a son, continuing his scholarly education in the Chinese classics. In 1897, Hōan received his first artist name, Misei, which he later changed to Hōan around 1929.

Hōan went to Tokyo in 1899 to study under Koyama Shōtarō (1857–1916), a leading oil painter of the Meiji Art Society (Meiji Bijutsu-kai), through the introduction of Yoshida Hiroshi (1876–1950), a student of Koyama whom Hōan had met in Nikkō. At Koyama's *juku*, Fudō-sha, Hōan had no trouble making his way, even with such talented rivals as Aoki Shigeru (1882–1911). At first he supported himself by drawing illustrations for textbooks and making watercolors for foreign tourists, but soon

Hōan began to publish drawings in publications such as *Kinji gahō* (Illustrated News of Current Affairs). In 1904, he was among those sent to the Russo-Japanese War as an artist-correspondent, travelling first to Korea and then to Manchuria.

From 1902 onwards, when Hōan became a founding member of the Pacific Painting Society (Taiheiyō Gakai), he was increasingly recognized, first as a popular cartoonist, then as a serious oil painter. His *manga* (cartoons) became associated with the art review *Hōsun* (literally "square inch"), and his work began to show the group's taste for French Symbolism. In 1911, Hōan made his name as a painter by winning a top prize in the government-sponsored Bunten for *Waterside Village* (Suigō), a painting said to have been inspired by Puvis de Chavannes's *Poor Fisherman*.

In 1913, Hōan, like many of his peers, went to Europe for a year, but unlike most, he came back not as an advocate for the new European artistic fashion but as an apologist for the Chinese and Japanese artistic tradition. Appointed head of the *yōga* division of the Reorganized Japan Art Institute (Saikō Nihon Bijutsu-in) in 1914 with Yokoyama Taikan's support, he energetically promoted a "Japanese oil painting style" and started to paint *Nihonga*. Due to the predictable tensions that arose between the *yōga* and *Nihonga* members of the Institute, the *yōga* artists, which included Morita Tsunetomo (1881–1933) and Yamamoto Kanae (1882–1946), in addition to Hōan, left the Institute after six years. They eventually joined artists like Kishida Ryūsei (1891–1929) to form Shun'yō-kai in 1922, an organization dedicated to promoting artistic "individualism."

In the mid-1920s, Hōan was commissioned to paint large public murals, such as those for Tokyo Imperial University's Yasuda Hall in 1925. Later, Hōan's work became more intimate in scale after he returned to the Myōkō Highland in Niigata Prefecture just after World War II. In these years, he indulged himself by spending much of his time reading Tang classics as well as the works of the Japanese poets Saigyō (1118–1190) and Bashō (1644–1694). Often, these cultural heroes were the subject of his *nanga*-style paintings.

Hōan had no students to carry on his legacy. His friend, the writer Akutagawa Ryūnosuke (1892–1927), described Hōan's work as having "a seeming mildness which is never empty, but under a thin cold shadow of eerie despair."

(Miriam Wattles)

Kubota Beisen, 1852–1906
久保田 米僊



Beisen was an uncommon figure during the period of the 1880s and 1890s, the most active phase of his career. His accomplishments as an artist have been overshadowed by his numerous other activities, such as his role in the establishment of the Kyoto-Prefecture Painting School (Kyoto-fu Gagakkō). It may be possible that he did not reach his full potential as an artist because of his unusual range of interests and activities.

Beisen's father, a Kyoto restaurant keeper, may well have objected to his only son's becoming an artist, which had been Beisen's ambition since early childhood. It is unlikely, however, that he could have studied with his teacher Suzuki Hyakunen (1825–1891) without his father's knowledge. By the sheer force of personality, intellectual pretensions, and family connections, Hyakunen had established a *juku* that, according to Beisen, attracted many wealthy townsmen who came dressed in crested kimonos to study painting as a pastime. This may well be why Beisen's father agreed when his son was sixteen to let him study with Hyakunen, whose school was, after the death of Shiokawa Bunrin, preeminent.

By the early 1880s, Beisen had demonstrated his ability as an innovative artist, as may be seen in his *Pine Trees and Autumn Leaves*, 1885 (Plate 19) and a historical painting entitled *Hazy Moon* (Oborozukiyo) that won a second prize at the second Domestic Painting Competitive Exhibition (*Naikoku kaiga kyōshinkai*) in Tokyo in 1884.

Despite differences in temperament, Beisen worked cooperatively with Kōno Bairei on a number of important ventures, such as the recommendation submitted in 1878 to establish a painting school, their joint participation in exhibitions and juries, their sponsorship in 1886 of the Kyoto Young Painters' Study Group (Kyoto Seinen Kaiga Kenkyūkai), and the establishment of the Kyoto Art Association (Kyoto Bijutsu Kyōkai) in 1890. But Beisen was too actively engaged politically to remain in Kyoto and too wise to become entangled in the dissension of Hyakunen's successors, his eldest son Shōnen, and his leading pupil, Imao Keinen (1845–1924).

Beisen instead accepted an offer in 1890 from Tokutomi Sohō (1863–1957) to serve as journalist-illustrator for *Kokumin shinbun* (People's Newspaper) in Tokyo. He attended the Universal Exposition in Paris in 1889, at which he won a gold prize, while only a silver prize was awarded to Bairei. An account of his journey appeared in his illustrated book, *Beisen's Journey* (Beisen man'yūgafu) and a subsequent book, *Art Exhibited at the World's Columbian Exposition*, 1894 (Plate 27) recounted his trip to the Chicago World's Fair held in 1893 where he met and influenced the American painter John Sloan. He went to Korea in 1894 to cover the Sino-Japanese War, accompanied by his two sons, and later published *Illustrated Book of the Sino-Japanese War* (Nisshin sensō gahō). His pair of hanging scrolls, *Battles by Land and Sea*, 1894 (Plate 28) shows his skill in adapting such themes to the traditional medium and format of *Nihonga*.

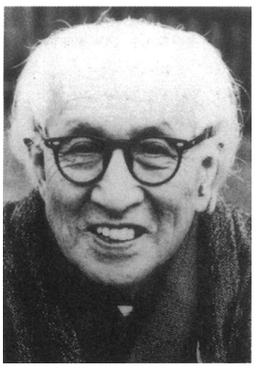
In 1890 Beisen settled in Tokyo and became very interested in issues related to design. Although known primarily as a painter of historical themes, he was also skilled at landscape, bird-and-flower, and animal painting. He numbered among his pupils a wealthy American, Henry P. Bowie, who later published *On the Laws of Japanese Painting* (1911), one of the first books in English to discuss the techniques of *Nihonga*. In 1897 Beisen began to teach at a technical school in Ishikawa Prefecture, but because of failing eyesight he resigned in 1899 and returned to Tokyo.

Completely blind by 1900, Beisen thereafter lived in retirement, spending his time composing *haiku* and *kyōka*. He had studied Chinese literature with Sawatari Sessai and Chinese poetry with Kamiyama Hōyō. He was fond of *haiku*, *kyōka*, and *senryū*, and assisted in the publication of several poetry magazines. Beisen had great respect for Yosa no Buson (1716–1783) as a *haiku* poet. Toward the end of his life he wrote a book on Buson's poetry, and another book, *The Theory of Color* (Shikisai-ron).

Although his career was varied, his travel extensive, and his numerous books of unusual interest, Beisen has never received the attention he warrants because he departed from the traditional course. It has been said that his ideas and interests outstripped his accomplishments, but too little of his work is known to justify that conclusion. His career is of particular relevance because his combined activities as a painter and newspaper illustrator anticipate the career of such leading Tokyo artists of the next generation as Kaburaki Kiyokata, Kobayashi Kokei, Maeda Seison and others.

(Ellen P. Conant)

Maeda Seison, 1885–1977
前田 青邨



"Seison is the sort of man who can walk in any direction"—such was the impression the art of the young Maeda Seison made on a contemporary in the 1910s. Over the next sixty years his art confirmed this assessment. Less committed than the first-generation painters of the Japan Art Institute (Nihon Bijutsu-in) to defining a national identity through his art, he enjoyed the self-confidence to paint whatever stimulated him. His art overall displays so extensive a variety of styles, subjects, and techniques that it almost constitutes a concise history of traditional Japanese painting in the modern era. His figure paintings alone ranged from historical, religious, literary, and legendary, to genre figures and direct portraiture. He also did landscape, bird-and-flower, and fish and animal paintings. Based upon his training in *Yamato-e* art, his style shifted effortlessly and eclectically into what earlier generations had classified as Rinpa, ink painting, and *nanga*. Only the traditional Kanō style and the paintings of kimono-clad beauties escaped his interest. His style, being a fusion of various aspects of all these schools, significantly shaped that synthesis of traditional Japanese art which is *Nihonga*.

As a leading member of the Japan Art Institute, Seison was deeply conscious of this group's novel interpretation of traditional Japanese line drawing, particularly in ink. In fact, he is most noted for his line drawing, for its liveliness and his *tarashikomi* inkwash technique. His lines in pale ink appear to be drawn lightly and rhythmically in a natural, carefree manner. Actually, they are the result of countless preparatory sketches and the enormous energy he imparted to his brush. His daughters recall that every summer they would hold their breath, upon hearing groans from their father's room where he was straining over the line drawing—the most crucial stage—in his work for the fall exhibition of the Institute. To relieve the intensity of his efforts at drawing, Seison often went on sketching trips. Ready to start off anytime with his sack of drawing instruments, he let his eye be guided by instinct and pleasure. What his eye caught was almost simultaneously transmitted by his hand to paper. His eye and hand worked almost as quickly as a camera.

What is perhaps most surprising about his work is its uniformly high level of accomplishment over the span of his long career. His skill and creativity peaked in his late sixties through his seventies. But even in his eighties, he produced strikingly fresh, dynamic works and also headed the projects for the reproduction of the Hōryūji murals (destroyed by fire in 1949) and for the study of the murals of the recently excavated Takamatsuzuka tumulus. For a small man who had been weak from birth, his life and work proved remarkably energetic.

Maeda Seison was born in Nakatsugawa, a small town in Gifu Prefecture. His father ran a grocery store specializing in the sale of the local delicacy of preserved birds. At the age of thirteen, shortly after his mother died of tuberculosis, Seison went to Tokyo to stay with his uncle. Succumbing also to tuberculosis, he had to return home. But, two years later he came back to Tokyo, determined to pursue his interest in art.

Seison soon met Ozaki Kōyō (1867–1903), a celebrated novelist of the time, who in turn introduced him to Kajita Hanko (1870–1917). A painter widely known for his illustration of novels, Hanko was a popular mentor to aspiring young artists who, like Seison, had no particular ties in Tokyo art circles. Many new literary magazines and newspapers were gaining readers for their serialized novels around the turn of the century; these publications provided illustration work for talented youths struggling to make a living. Whether Seison originally intended to become an illustrator is not clear, but he made rapid progress while a live-in student of Hanko's. After he left Hanko's studio in 1904, he continued doing illustration work for novels in the next few years, sometimes for Hanko.

When his first submission to a public exhibition won a prize and sold for twelve yen in 1902, the seventeen-year-old Seison probably began to think more seriously of becoming a painter. Following the advice of Kobayashi Kokei, Seison audited lectures on classical Japanese literature at Kokugakuin University. He also attended art seminars given by the Japan Art Institute. The major turning point in his career came in 1907, when he joined the Kōji-kai, a small group of young painters advocating a new style for painting historical subjects. With Imamura Shikō and Yasuda Yukihiko as its leaders, and with Kokei whose participation began in 1909, this group would form the core of the Institute's second generation of artists when it was resurrected in 1914. Seison's painting of mythological figures was rejected by the first Bunten in 1907. In 1909, a serious illness prevented him from painting for a year. However, when his painting based on a classical tale won an award at the fifth Bunten in 1911, the 26-year-old Seison was offered financial support by Hara Sankei (1868–1939).

A wealthy Yokohama businessman and art collector, Hara was the most influential patron of younger painters in the Japan Art Institute and its circles. He often provided them with a residence in the Yokohama area and encouraged them to study his collection of old masterpieces. Seison painted at Hara's residence a handscroll based on a thirteenth-century historical chronicle for the next Bunten. Fifteen years later Seison reflected gratefully on the three advantages bestowed on him in his youth: study under Kajita Hanko; encouragement and stimulation from his Kōji-kai friends; and the very generous patronage extended by Hara.

Around this time Seison also received valuable, if intermittent, advice from Okakura Tenshin, the head of the Institute. When in 1912 Seison sought Tenshin's advice about a handscroll he had been working on at Hara's residence, he received no comments on his own preparatory drawings, but was treated to a highly instructive lecture on Japanese classical handscroll masterpieces. Afterwards, Seison became more interested in, and produced his own masterpieces of, handscrolls. In fact, two-thirds of his known handscrolls were painted over the next fifteen years.

When the Reorganized Japan Art Institute (Saikō Nihon Bijutsu-in) was established in 1914, Seison joined along with his fellow Kōji-kai members and exhibited a triptych of a genre scene as well as another handscroll based upon a classic tale. Seison eventually became one of the three major young artists, along with Kokei and Yukihiko, of the Institute. He showed all his major works at its regular exhibitions for the rest of his life.

In 1915, after a trip to Korea, he made his first painting about Korean life, *Handscroll of Korea* (Plate 145), for the fall exhibition. He made at least three more visits to Korea, serving as a judge at the Korean Art Exhibitions of 1935 and 1936. He made trips to China (1919, 1938) and Manchuria (1934, 1938), at times travelling through Korea. During his 1938 visit to Manchuria he served as a judge for the Manchurian Art Exhibition. In 1960 he headed a group of Japanese painters who made a cultural exchange visit to China.

He visited the West only once, when in 1922 he and Kokei were sponsored by the Institute to study old European paintings for almost a year. While in London, the painters made a copy of *Admonitions of the Instructress*, attributed to Gu Kaizhi (c.344–c.406). Seison most appreciated the works of Cézanne while he was in France; Cézanne remained an artist whom he respected for the rest of his life.

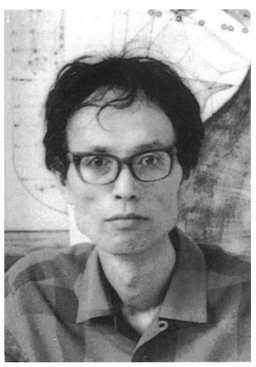
Seison received all the honors possible

for a painter during both the pre- and post-1945 periods, but he kept surprising his public with the unfaltering creative power of his art up to his death. He was an influential teacher at the Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music (Tokyo Geijutsu Daigaku, formerly Tokyo Bijutsu Gakkō) for seven years. He was also known as a painter for the imperial family, teaching the Empress and making mural paintings in the new Imperial Palace. Seison and his wife Sue became the first husband and wife to be separately named members of the Japan Arts Academy (Nihon Geijutsu-in).

(Hiroko T. McDermott)

Mikami Makoto, 1919–1972

三上 誠



Mikami Makoto was born Shimada Makoto in Osaka, and adopted shortly thereafter by the Mikami family of Fukui, a prefectural capital northeast of Kyoto. At middle school, Mikami demonstrated a talent for art, mainly oil painting. In 1940, after failing the entrance examination to the Western painting department at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts, he enrolled in the Kyoto Municipal Special School of Painting (Kyoto Shiritsu Kaiga Senmon Gakkō), where he majored in *Nihonga*. He was an impressive pupil, but his student years were darkened by the war. After graduating in 1944, he remained at the school as an assistant.

At the end of war, Mikami saw Japan's surrender as an opportunity for change. Diaries from the period reveal he was already thinking about art reform, opposing the feudalistic *Nihonga* establishment of the past by forming a new artists' group. In May 1948, Mikami and seven other young artists founded the group Panreal; it later became the Panreal Art Association (Panriaru Bijutsu Kyōkai) when Shimomura Ryōnosuke and other graduates of the Kyoto Special School of Painting joined with them to issue a manifesto, calling for innovations in *Nihonga*. During this period, many of Mikami's works depicted the blasted rubble of his native Fukui, which had been destroyed by air raids, while Kyoto had escaped bombing and remained intact.

In the early 1950s he was fascinated by Cubism (especially Picasso) and Surrealism. But he was often distracted from his work by the early symptoms of the pulmonary tuberculosis which eventually killed him. By 1952 his health worsened dramatically, and he finally had to undergo two operations. He was forced to return home to Fukui to recuperate and never lived in Kyoto again.

Unable to paint due to the post-operation pain, Mikami expressed himself through writing. In poems and diaries he wrote of his suffering from the illness, his dislike of the country environment, his pain at being cut off from the outside world (especially the Kyoto art scenes), and his frustration at being bedridden. Writing, cathartic though it may have been, was no substitute for painting; it is clear that his desire to recover was deeply related to his desire to paint. At the time, inspired by Indian, Persian, and Greek creation myths, he was fascinated by the idea of a cosmic egg, an image he repeatedly depicted.

In the early 1960s Mikami recovered enough to feel more confident about his future; in June 1961 he married Inui Masako, a fellow artist of the Panreal group, whose letters had supported him during his convalescence. From the time of his wedding until the mid-1960s he had his most productive period (Figure 7.9). Sadly, his wife became mentally ill and their relationship did not remain a happy one. The rigors of his professional schedule—constant participation in exhibitions and unceasing artistic production—may have contributed to his increased weakness toward the end of the 1960s. From 1965 on, he daily underwent painful moxa treatments; while they did little to stop his decline, they provided the theme for a series of paintings (Figure 7.10). He increasingly displayed a fatalistic frame of mind, becoming fascinated by astrology and Buddhist cosmology. His health took another turn for the worse in 1971, and he died on January 16, 1972, at the age of 52.

Mori Kansai, 1814–1894

森 寛斎



Mori Kansai emerged after 1875 as the leading representative of the Maruyama school in the Kyoto-Osaka area and became the head of Joun-sha following the death of Shiokawa Bunrin in 1877. During his last years he was a respected artist-statesman whose reputation was enhanced by his nobility of character and the performance of his leading pupil, Yamamoto Shunkyo.

Kansai was the younger son of a minor samurai employed as an accountant in the castle town of Hagi, the conservative stronghold of Chōshū domain during the Restoration. Despite parental protests, he received initial training from a local artist, Ōta Ryū, and was later sent by his clan to Edo where he served in some unknown capacity. He was 22 when he came to Osaka to study with one of the ten major disciples of Maruyama Ōkyo (1733–1795), Mori Tetsuzan (1775–1841), who taught in Edo before moving to Osaka. Tetsuzan's realistic treatment of animal and figure subjects was much admired by wealthy merchants. Kansai was adopted by Tetsuzan in 1838 when he married his daughter, but since Mori Ippō (1798–1871) was destined to succeed the older artist, he recommended that Kansai replenish the dwindling ranks of the Maruyama school in Kyoto.

During the Ansei period (1854–1859), Kansai was ranked seventeenth in order of popularity in the *Reputations of Kyoto Painters* (Heian gaka hyōban-ki) and was commissioned to paint a set of cedar doors for the Kyoto Imperial Palace. He supposedly studied *nanga*, which was then popular, and travelled extensively. His few paintings dating from this period give little evidence of *nanga* influence, although his interest is said to have persisted and become more pronounced in his later years.

After the Chōshū clan was expelled from Kyoto in 1863, Kansai secretly relayed information for the clan, but when his activities were discovered the following year he fled to Shikoku. While there, he repaired some of the *fusuma* painted by Ōkyo at the Konpira Shrine, and he himself

also painted several works for them. He continued to act as a courier and during frequent visits to Chōshū he came to know the men who later held important posts in the Meiji government.

When he returned to Kyoto he was deftly outmaneuvered by Shiokawa Bunrin for the leadership of a new organization, Joun-sha, which Kansai joined. Although Kansai was offended by Kōno Bairei's officious support of Bunrin, the two were not dissimilar as painters and maintained a courteous relationship. Kansai took part in an impromptu painting performance held in 1873, and in 1877 was awarded prizes at the Kyoto Exposition and at the first Domestic Industrial Exposition (*Naikoku kangyō hakurankai*) in Tokyo.

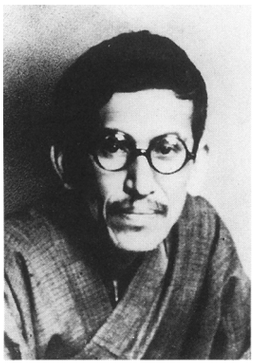
In 1877, Joun-sha chose Kansai as its new head rather than Bairei. This choice had less to do with art than with the attitude of its membership. By 1877 most of the prominent artists who had founded Joun-sha were deceased, and others had lost their privileged status, while many scholars and connoisseurs found their recondite knowledge less vital to a government concerned with industrial expansion. They therefore preferred a leader more concerned with conserving the past than with exploiting the present. Under the guidance of Kansai, Joun-sha developed into a purely social organization for people with cultural interests and a fondness for the arts.

Kansai's wide range of techniques included ink painting. One source maintains that he never worked from preliminary sketches but always directly on the painting. He is said to have created his own subjects and never to have duplicated them, but he does not appear to have been conspicuously creative or innovative. He was a very relaxed and lenient teacher who believed that art cannot be taught but must be learned by the pupils themselves, who were free to come and go as they chose. Early widowed, he took a parental attitude towards his pupils and advanced the career of Yamamoto Shunkyo and his adopted son, Mori Yūzan.

There are numerous tales relating to Kansai's fondness for drink and for travel. He seemed to have had no worldly desires and no interest in official honors. Among his friends and patrons, he numbered the statesman Konoe Atsumaro and Tomioka Tessai. In celebration of his eightieth birthday, an exhibition of more than 600 of his works was held at the Kyoto Exposition in September 1893, but relatively few of his works are now known. He seems to have reached his fullest development during his last decade.

(Ellen P. Conant)

Murakami Kagaku, 1888–1939
村上 華岳



Murakami Kagaku was something of an anomaly among the artists of the Association for the Creation of National Painting (Kokuga Sōsaku Kyōkai). He was set apart from his colleagues by his family background, having spent his earliest years in poverty but his youth in a wealthy household. He shared with his colleagues a passionate dedication to artistic freedom, but he was less interested in exploring the possibilities offered by contemporary Western art. He never went to Europe, although he travelled quite extensively within Japan. When the Association broke up in 1928, Kagaku spent the last decade of his life distanced from the art world establishment in which some of his colleagues were finding acclaim. Instead, Kagaku led a quiet and astonishingly productive life, painting because he lived to paint, but free of the pressures faced by artists who must paint to make a living.

Born to a Takeda family that had practiced medicine in Osaka through generations, Kagaku had a difficult childhood. His father, a man of learning but with little practical sense, was never able to support his family. At the age of seven, Kagaku moved in with his aunt who had married into the Murakami family in Kobe. When he was thirteen, his father died and his mother left the family; his aunt and her husband adopted him in 1904.

Since his adoptive parents were quite well off, he was never required to work to earn his keep. He spent seven years studying painting, first at the Kyoto Municipal School of Arts and Crafts (Kyoto Shiritsu Bijutsu Kōgei Gakkō) from 1903 to 1909, and then at the Kyoto Municipal Special School of Painting (Kyoto Shiritsu Kaiga Senmon Gakkō) from 1909 to 1911. His acquaintance with some members of the Association for the Creation of National Painting dates from his schooldays. Sakakibara Shihō was in his class and Irie Hakō, who would become his best friend, was two years his senior at the School of Arts and Crafts.

In their student years, Kagaku and Hakō found a great affinity with medieval European art and the Pre-Raphaelites whose idealized vision, delicacy, and love of detail were most appealing. They saw a similarity between this kind of European art and the art of the early Edo period and sought to synthesize these styles within their own paintings.

Kagaku's talent was recognized early by the mainstream art world. Already in 1908, while he was still a student at the School of Arts and Crafts, his work was accepted at the second Bunten. His graduation work in 1911, *Around February* (Nigatsu no koro), received awards both at the sixteenth Exhibition of New and Old Art (*Shinko bijutsuhin ten*) of Kyoto and the fifth Bunten in Tokyo. However, his acceptance at the Bunten thereafter became erratic. Kagaku won the top award at the tenth Bunten in 1916 with *Amitabha* (Amida), a very sensuous picture on a Buddhist theme that revealed his study of the Hōryūji and Ajanta murals. Yet his work was rejected in 1917 at the eleventh Bunten. Like many of his former classmates, Kagaku began to feel slighted by the mainstream art world. With the support of Takeuchi Seihō, their teacher at the Special School of Painting, Kagaku, Tsuchida Bakusen, Ono Chikkyō, Shihō, and Nonagase Banka (1889–1964) decided to establish the Association for the Creation of National Painting in 1918.

Although Kagaku was a man of deep conviction, it does not appear that he was a driving force behind the group, but rather that he participated in order to support his friends. Enthusiastic and dedicated as he was, his espousal of individuality and originality in painting stemmed from the independence and self-sufficiency that were fundamental aspects of his character. He was loyal to his friends, but he himself had no great need for clubs, societies, or organizations.

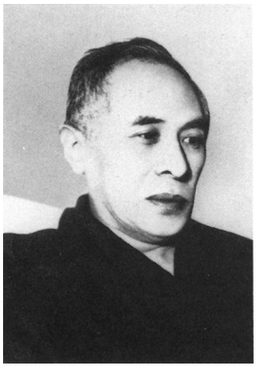
The Association's annual exhibitions, which were received favorably by the public, were interrupted in 1921 when some members travelled to Europe. Originally the trip was intended to include all of the group's members. However, at the last minute, two remained in Japan: Kagaku for health reasons and Shihō because his wife had died just prior to the group's departure. The exhibition was resumed in 1924. Kagaku showed four works at the Association's fourth exhibition: two Buddhist subjects, one still-life, and one flower painting. This exhibition proved to be a turning point for Kagaku. Not having had the opportunity to travel abroad as his friends had, Kagaku was absorbed in different aesthetic issues. At about the same time, his poor health forced him to move to Ashiya, a city between Kobe and Osaka, where the climate was milder. Both factors distanced him psychologically as well as physically from the Kyoto art world. The Association's fifth exhibition in 1926 was

Kagaku's last.

The Association's *Nihonga* division disbanded in 1928, mainly due to financial problems. By then, however, Kagaku had lost what little interest he had in the world of ambitious, up-and-coming artists. Already in 1923 and 1925, Kagaku had had his first solo exhibitions in Osaka, which provided him with alternative opportunities to show his work. When his adoptive father died in 1926, Kagaku was obliged to move back to the family home in Kobe, where he settled down into a quiet existence with his beloved wife and family. Having inherited enough money to live comfortably, Kagaku sold his paintings only when he needed extra funds to buy more books or paintings by other artists.

This was a most productive period for Kagaku. Kobe was filled with businessmen and entrepreneurs looking for art to buy, and Kagaku had no trouble finding patronage. He received generous support from art collectors in Tokyo as well. While his old friends Bakusen and Chikkyō were making names for themselves at the Teiten exhibitions and within other established art circles, Kagaku kept up an industrious but less conspicuous career of his own. Between 1931 and 1936, benefactors sponsored exhibitions of his work in Kobe, Kyoto, and Tokyo. Although these were years in which the specter of the war was casting darker and more menacing shadows over Japan, no sense of this appears in his painting. Kagaku's work from this period is otherworldly and idealized. Perhaps his financial security insulated him from the hardships that were part of the daily life of ordinary people, or perhaps painting provided him a welcome space of calm in a world rapidly slipping into fearful conflict. At any event, with the encouragement and support he received from his patrons, Kagaku worked steadily until the very day of his death.

Nishimura Goun, 1877–1938
西村 五雲



Heir to the expressive renderings of animals of his first teacher Kishi Chikudō, and the more sophisticated depictions of his second teacher Takeuchi Seihō, Nishimura Goun was recognized as a minor master whose genial representations of both familiar and uncommon animal subjects had the brevity and evocative charm of *haiku* or a musical etude.

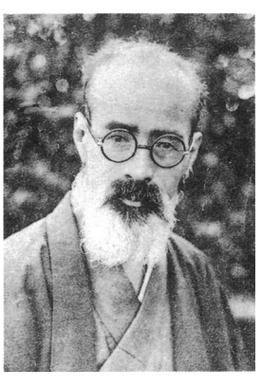
The second son of a Kyoto dyer, Goun was twelve when be began to study painting with Chikudō, who impressed upon him during his seven years of tutelage the importance of accurately observing and sketching directly from nature. By 1893 his early painting, *Chrysanthemums* (Kikka zu), was shown at the exhibition of the Japan Art Association (Nihon Bijutsu Kyōkai) in Tokyo. After the death of Chikudō, Goun and several other pupils entered the *juku* of Seihō in 1899. It is natural that he should have turned to Seihō, who had already shown his talent for rendering animals. The following year, Goun was one of several of Seihō's pupils awarded a third prize at the tenth anniversary exhibition of the Kyoto Art Association (Kyoto Bijutsu Kyōkai). By depicting so unfamiliar a subject as a polar bear poised before a snowy crag, Goun won a third prize at the first Bunten (Figure 4.1).

In 1909 he accepted a temporary position at the Kyoto Municipal School of Arts and Crafts (Kyoto Shiritsu Bijutsu Kōgei Gakkō) and was given a permanent appointment in 1913. Meanwhile, he established his own *juku* in 1912. He began to suffer from a protracted debilitating illness in 1914, and his health was severely impaired for close to decade, during which he could only produce small-scale works. He nonetheless participated in the Teiten and many other major exhibitions in Tokyo and Kyoto. He recovered sufficiently by 1924 to accept a teaching position at the Kyoto Municipal Special School of Painting (Kyoto Shiritsu Kaiga Senmon Gakkō) where he was active until 1936. Following his death in 1938, a memorial exhibition was held in 1940 at the Kyoto Municipal Museum of Art (Kyoto-shi Bijutsukan).

Goun's illness compelled him to concentrate on exacting the maximum impact from small-scale works. This led him to sharpen his delineation, brighten his palette, and compress his composition. The extreme sophistication of his execution lent a wry air to his winsome representations of the garden variety of animals, and extended as well to a wily fox, a quizzical family of monkeys, and gamboling seals (Plate 98). At first glance, these small animal paintings bear a striking resemblance to the contemporary work of Seihō in that they share a common urbanity. Goun, however, held his own by virtue not only of the fidelity of his representation but also by his remarkable flair for endowing each of these animals with its own distinctive temperament, a talent that won him public acclaim while the utter refinement of his execution assured him critical respect.

(Ellen P. Conant)

Ogawa Usen, 1868 –1938
小川 芋銭



The name of Ogawa Usen is most often associated with his favorite motif, *kappa*, those ubiquitous Japanese water imps which have appeared in art and literature for centuries. Usen apparently believed that these creatures inhabited the swamp behind his house in Ushiku, Ibaraki Prefecture. In an inscription to one of his paintings, Usen perhaps revealed why he painted them: "*Kappa* may be stupid, but they are not stained with human falsehood and atrocity. Eating only plants, they never attack fish, their fellow inhabitants of the bog." Having participated for some years in the socialist utopian movement of the late Meiji era, Usen spent much of his life in retreat, expressing his romantic disillusionment with society in seemingly whimsical paintings of the *nanga* (literati) style. His compatriot Kosugi Hōan described Usen's paintings as having subterranean "tears of resignation [and] poeticized anguish".

The oldest son of a high-ranking samurai of the Ushiku clan who lost his livelihood after the Meiji Restoration, Usen was

shuttled from house to house for much of his boyhood. At twelve, he was sent to Tokyo from his impoverished home in Ushiku to become a shop apprentice. Usen showed little aptitude for business. Taking pity on him, an aunt sent him to elementary school and then to study painting with Honda Kinkichirō (1850–1921), a *yōga* painter who had taken over the Shōgidō, a *juku* for Western-style painting founded by Kunisawa Shinkurō (1847–1877). As a teacher, Honda was more interested in reading Chinese and Japanese classics and books of English aesthetics than in painting. Under him, Usen resumed the study of the Chinese classics which he had begun at his hometown school, and developed his lifelong appreciation for literati artists, especially the eighteenth-century painter Ike no Taiga (1723–1776).

Usen found his artistic niche outside of Tokyo. After experiencing mixed success as a newspaper illustrator in Tokyo between 1888 and 1893, the 26-year-old Usen was ordered to return home by his father. Back in Ushiku, he was fortunate to marry Kii, a hard-working farmer's daughter who took over the management of the family and land, freeing Usen to pursue his *haiku* and his art.

Around 1898, he began drawing *manga* (cartoons) for the local newspaper, *Ibaraki shinbun*, which was edited by a member of the liberal socialist Heimin-sha group. Through these activities, he became friends with the artist Kosugi Hōan and the well-known socialist Kōtoku Shūsui (1871–1911) with whom he shared a love for the founder of Daoism, Laozi. From 1903, he started publishing his *manga* works in the socialist paper, *Heimin shinbun* (Commoners' Newspaper). Around this time, he also began to publish his illustrations of the daily lives of farmers in *Kokumin shinbun* (People's Newspaper), the *Yomiuri* newspaper, and the pioneering *haiku* journal *Hototogisu*.

The High Treason Incident of 1910, in which Kōtoku Shūsui was arrested and executed, serves to explain Usen's shift from his associations with the *manga* movement and its politics toward the reclusiveness of an artist who communicated primarily with nature and exhibited only occasionally. Usen took up painting with artists such as Hōan, with whom Usen had had a *manga* exhibition in 1911. In 1915 he helped Hirafuku Hyakusui and Kawabata Ryūshi initiate Sango-kai, a group of young artists who were trained in *yōga* and exploring the expressive powers of *Nihonga*. In 1917, Usen's conversion to *nanga* painting resulted in works that led Kosugi Hōan and Yokoyama Taikan to recommend him for membership in the Japan Art Institute (Nihon Bijutsu-in). Although Usen never felt understood by the Institute, he continued to submit his major work to its exhibition, Inten, throughout his life. His affiliation with the Institute was enough to ensure limited renown and continued commissions.

Usen accomplished some of his best work in his later years, spending much of each year at some inn in the mountains or at the sea. His student Kobayashi Sōkyojin (1897–1978) accompanied him to assist with the daily chores. Waking up to recite the *Kannon sutra*, then writing letters to his friends in a calligraphic hand that made them worthy of mounting, he then would drink *sake* as he painted, or, if he couldn't paint that day, he would immerse himself in reading Chinese or Japanese classics. When painting his strange fantastic beings or recording landscapes which appear to move like visions, Usen could seem to have left the worldly for the ethereal.

(Miriam Wattles)

Ogura Yuki, b.1895
小倉 遊亀



Ogura Yuki's father, a merchant in Ōtsu, Shiga Prefecture, left his wife and daughter and went to Manchuria in 1905 when Yuki was ten years old; he did not return to Japan for some forty years. After graduating from the Nara Women Teacher's College (Nara Joshi Kōtō Shihan Gakkō), Yuki worked as a school teacher to support her mother and herself. She had become interested in art through two teachers at the college who were acquainted with artists of the Japan Art Institute (Nihon Bijutsu-in). Yuki continued her interest in painting while teaching and became a pupil of Yasuda Yukihiko in 1920. Yuki did not consider herself a professional artist until after the age of forty. Yet she achieved a distinguished career: she was the first woman to become a member of the Japan Art Institute, as well as the first woman to become its director.

In 1938, Yuki, already a prominent Institute artist, surprised everyone by marrying Ogura Tetsuju (1865–1944), a Zen philosopher thirty years her senior. During the short marriage that ended with Tetsuju's death in 1944, Yuki devoted herself to the care of her ailing husband whom she respected as her spiritual mentor. Her involvement in Zen and her willingness to put aside her art during this time had a liberating effect that can be seen in her early elegant masterpieces.

In fact, *torawarenai*, or "to be free" was Yuki's lifelong goal from the time she became Yasuda Yukihiko's pupil. At their first meeting in 1920, Yukihiko helped Yuki break through her artistic slump with his advice: "start fresh by freeing yourself from all the familiar methods in your painting, even the use of line." He emphasized the importance of being only faithful to one's visual sensation and to avoid being trapped by a particular style or technique. It was a lesson Yuki treasured throughout her life.

The 1950s and 1960s saw the emergence of an individual style for Yuki in which she explored both the structural and formal elements of painting as well as the expressive potential of the traditional *Nihonga* medium. The blossoming of her modern sensitivity to form is manifest in her figural masterpieces such as *Seated Portrait of Mrs. O.*, 1953 (Plate 93). To Yuki, however, distortion in her painting is not intentional. Once she proceeds to work following her eyes and emotions, the particular shape or area "ends up distorted," resulting in an image pictorially satisfying and truthful to her.

Although Yuki is known primarily as a figure painter, still-life appears early in her oeuvre and occupies a particularly important place after 1970. Ordinary subjects such as the flowers and plants in her garden or the vegetables and fruits in her kitchen often found a place in her still-life paintings. Her wholehearted embrace of the Zen ideal, to see Buddhahood in all things, imbues her small still-lifes with an uncommon sense of presence and inner vitality.

(Michiyo Morioka)

Okumura Togyū, 1889–1990
奥村 土牛



If Yokoyama Taikan is the best known *Nihonga* master today, Okumura Togyū is perhaps the most loved *Nihonga* painter of the postwar years. In a long career that overlapped the entire Shōwa period (1926–1989), Togyū maintained both in his painting style and in his attitudes toward art a strong commitment to traditional values. This set him somewhat apart from artists of later generations who sought to experiment with the *Nihonga* tradition during the 1960s and afterwards.

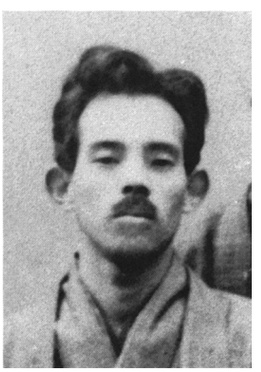
Born to a publisher in Tokyo, Togyū was sixteen when he entered the *juku* of the painter-illustrator Kajita Hanko (1870–1917). There he became acquainted with Hanko's chief student, Kobayashi Kokei, with whom he would later live as caretaker in 1920–1922. In 1912, Togyū was employed at the Statistics Division of the Bureau of Money Orders and Savings of the Ministry of Communications, where he designed posters, postcards, and statistical charts. In 1923, the year he lost his sketches, studies, and paintings in the Great Kantō Earthquake, Togyū joined the study group of the Japan Art Institute (Nihon Bijutsu-in); from around the spring of 1926, he attended the study group organized by Hayami Gyoshū, upon the recommendation of Kokei.

Togyū was slow to flower as an artist. Although he was recognized in prewar years—accepted as a full member of the Institute in 1932 and appointed a judge for the government-sponsored Shin-Bunten (New Bunten) in 1941–1943—his most significant work was not executed until the late 1950s, a period during which he refined his compositions and color. Seemingly indifferent to the many changes in the art world as well as in the larger currents of society during his long lifetime, Togyū quietly persevered in the development of his artistic skills. While acquaintances belittled East Asian painting, Togyū continued to study Song and Yuan painting, classic Japanese paintings, and Western art, particularly the work of Cézanne. Togyū repeated the same subject time after time, making fresh drawings of objects long familiar to him. His art name "Togyū," which he first used on paintings in 1917, reflects this resolute character: it refers in part to the year of the Ox, in which he was born, but more significantly to the oxen which were used to turn stony land into bountiful fields through repeated plowing. It signified his perseverance.

In many ways, Togyū did indeed come to internalize the virtues inherent in his name. He wrote that he was already more than 80 years old when he began to understand what his work was all about. Following the personal advice of his much admired colleague Yokoyama Taikan to bring alive the spirit of the universe in his painting, Togyū strove to produce works that were lively even if they were not always skillfully done. "Art cannot be perfect," he wrote, "what is important is to what extent my art remains imperfect."

(Brenda G. Jordan and Hiroshi Nara)

Ono Chikkyō, 1889–1979
小野 竹喬



Born in Kasaoka, Okayama Prefecture, Ono Chikkyō had no interest in the family business. On his brother's recommendation he went to Kyoto after he finished elementary school. In 1903, he enrolled in Takeuchi Seihō's *juku* and two years later became Seihō's resident student. There Chikkyō met his lifelong friend, Tsuchida Bakusen. Like many of his fellow students, Chikkyō became very interested in the work of the French Impressionists while studying with Seihō.

Seihō encouraged his students to submit their work to exhibitions, and in 1906, Chikkyō's painting was accepted by the Exhibition of New and Old Art (*Shinko bijutsuhin ten*). For several years, he was successful with his submissions to this exhibition, each year winning an award. He also had a painting accepted to the first Bunten in 1907.

When the Kyoto Municipal Special School of Painting (Kyoto Shiritsu Kaiga Senmon Gakkō) was established in 1909, Chikkyō and Bakusen were among the very first to enroll in the school's adjunct course (*bekka*). In 1910, the budding art historian Tanaka Kisaku (1885–1945) who had lately returned from a trip to Europe suggested that several Kyoto *yōga* and *Nihonga* artists, including Bakusen and Chikkyō, gather to form a study group, Le Chat Noir. The group intended to hold their own exhibition, but the members could not agree on how they should select a jury, so it fell apart quickly. Then Tanaka organized another group, Le Masque, with many of the former members of Le Chat Noir. This group lasted long enough to organize two exhibitions, one in 1911 and the other in 1912; Chikkyō submitted his works to both. His paintings from this time revealed a strong influence of Post-Impressionism.

The judges at the government-sponsored Bunten were not much interested in the kind of work that Chikkyō and his colleagues were producing; getting their paintings accepted into the Bunten was a difficult and often disappointing process. Chikkyō's entry to the 1915 Bunten was rejected; his submission was accepted in 1916, but his work was rejected again in 1917. By that time his former classmates, equally frustrated, felt bitter about the situation, and on July 1, 1918, Chikkyō, Bakusen, Sakakibara Shihō, Nonagase Banka (1889–1964), and Murakami Kagaku drew up a manifesto for their own artists' cooperative, the Association for the Creation of National Painting (Kokuga Sōsaku Kyōkai).

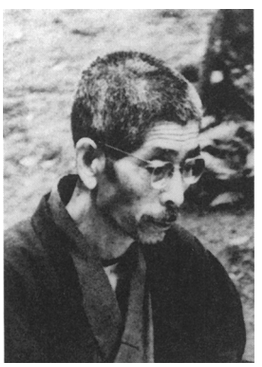
In 1921 Chikkyō, Bakusen, and Banka had an opportunity to travel abroad, which caused a suspension of the Association's exhibition program until 1924 (Figure 5.12). Chikkyō's journey took him through France, Italy, Spain, and England. He found the artists of the Italian Renaissance to be most compelling, and his later paintings reveal their influence. Chikkyō returned with a greater appreciation of Japanese Kanō-school painting and *nanga* derived from Chinese influence. His work thereafter was marked by his efforts to strike a balance between Western influences and Japanese sensibility.

The Association broke up in 1928, after its seventh exhibition. One of the factors contributing to its demise was purely financial: Japan was still suffering from the effects of the Great Kantō Earthquake of 1923, and depressed economic conditions both at home and abroad made matters worse. More importantly, the members were growing apart from each other in terms of their artistic goals.

In his later years, Chikkyō received better treatment from the mainstream art world. Along with Bakusen, he resumed showing at the government-sponsored exhibitions in 1929; the two later served as judges for the Shin-Bunten (New Bunten) and the Nitten. In 1947, Chikkyō was made a professor at his alma mater, which was

renamed the Kyoto Municipal Special School of Art (Kyoto Shiritsu Bijutsu Senmon Gakkō) after World War II. Chikkyō's postwar painting style softened a great deal, losing the strong contour lines which had characterized his painting after his return from Europe.

Sakakibara Shihō, 1887–1971
榊原 紫峰



Sakakibara Shihō was born in Kyoto to a *yūzen* dyer with the artist name of Rokō. Coming from a samurai family in the Tango province, Rokō moved to Kyoto at the beginning of the Meiji era. In the midst of the chaos of the Meiji Restoration, Rokō had to give up the idea of becoming a painter; instead, he took up *yūzen* dyeing to support his family. Four of Shihō's brothers, as well as Shihō himself, grew up to be painters, fulfilling their father's deferred ambition.

Shihō entered the Kyoto Municipal School of Arts and Crafts (Kyoto Shiritsu Bijutsu Kōgei Gakkō) in 1903. Murakami Kagaku was one of his classmates and Takeuchi Seihō and Yamamoto Shunkyo were their teachers. After graduating in 1907, Shihō, along with Kagaku, entered the postgraduate course, where they met Irie Hakō. The three friends then entered the Kyoto Municipal Special School of Painting (Kyoto Shiritsu Kaiga Senmon Gakkō) when it opened in 1909. Tsuchida Bakusen and Ono Chikkyō were also studying at this school, as was Shihō's brother Uson.

Shihō's work was first accepted to the Bunten that same year. In 1911, after another acceptance to the Bunten in 1910, his graduation work *Flower Cloud* (Hanagumori) received the third award at the fifth Bunten, winning him recognition in the official art world. The young artist's work, while still very romantic and sweet, already showed Shihō's keen awareness of the rhythms of nature.

Eventually Shihō's work lost much of its youthful sweetness. In his pursuit of a personal style, his painting lost much of the Shijō-type use of line which he had been taught at school, and he experimented more with Western-style coloration and contour lines, as seen with his 1915 *White Plums* (Hakubai), exhibited at the ninth Bunten. The work, which depicts the sturdy branches of ancient plum trees flowering despite the cold, appears to have had the scent of the blossoms painted into it.

Although Shihō had enjoyed good receptions in his early Bunten entries, his works of 1914 and 1916 were rejected. *Autumn Plants* (Akikusa) of 1914, however, was accepted to the exhibition of the Reorganized Japan Art Institute (Saikō Nihon Bijutsu-in) in the next year. The Institute, under the direction of the venerable Yokoyama Taikan, was interested in promoting the works of young, up-and-coming artists. Taikan invited Shihō to join the Institute, but Shihō, mindful that his teacher Seihō might view the situation negatively, declined the offer.

In 1917, Kagaku and Chikkyō, who had won the top awards the year before, were rejected from the Bunten; Bakusen and Shihō were accepted, but received no awards. Disgusted with the state of affairs, these artists, together with their colleague Nonagase Banka (1889–1964), decided to leave the Bunten competitions altogether and organize their own exhibitions. With full support from Seihō, they established the Association for the Creation of National Painting (Kokuga Sōsaku Kyōkai) in 1918.

In contrast to the work of some other Association members, especially that of Bakusen, Shihō's paintings seem firmly rooted in the painting traditions of East Asia. Although his works from the earlier phase of the Association reveal his interest in *yōga*, Shihō later sought inspiration within himself and turned to nature for his models. The paintings he exhibited in the later Association exhibitions demonstrate clearly the differences between his work, which expresses the profound appreciation that he held for things in nature, and the works of those who had been abroad.

The Association broke up in 1928. The main problem was financial, but other factors were involved as well: ten years after the group's founding, the members had moved in different directions and no longer had a common goal. After 1928, Shihō showed his work in public exhibitions infrequently and put his energy into education instead. He was appointed professor of the Kyoto Municipal Special School of Painting in 1937 (teaching until 1945). After World War II, when the school was reorganized as the Kyoto City University of Arts (Kyoto Shiritsu Geijutsu Daigaku) in 1950, he was again invited to teach as a professor.

Shimomura Kanzan, 1873–1930
下村 観山



As one of the three major painters of the Japan Art Institute (Nihon Bijutsu-in), Shimomura Kanzan has been recognized for his contribution to the revival and reinterpretation of the classic *Yamato-e* tradition. To a degree exceptional in his generation, he had a formidable command of traditional skill both in line and color.

The Shimomura family had for generations served in Edo the Tokugawa family of the Kii domain (present-day Wakayama Prefecture) as performers on the small drum in Noh drama. After the Meiji Restoration Kanzan's father moved to Wakayama, making his living as a carver of seals. Moving back to Tokyo in 1881, the father ran a flourishing business making ivory works, then a prized product for export. His eldest son, Hōzan, was also good at wood carving, particularly of Noh masks, and later became a member of the Institute. The third son, Kanzan preferred painting.

With an introduction from a family friend, the nine-year-old Kanzan began to take painting lessons from Kanō Hōgai in 1882. Four years later, Hōgai introduced the boy to Hashimoto Gahō, a junior colleague of Hōgai's from the Kobiki-chō Kanō school. Perhaps encouraged by Hōgai or Gahō, the thirteen-year-old Kanzan sent a hanging scroll of a snow landscape to the 1886 annual contest of the Kanga-kai, a small art study group sponsored by Ernest Fenollosa and William S. Bigelow.

In 1889 Kanzan entered the first class of the Tokyo School of Fine Arts (Tokyo Bijutsu Gakkō). One of his 58 classmates was Yokoyama Taikan, who remained his lifelong rival, friend, and colleague. Kanzan's former teacher Gahō was the school's chief professor of painting. But Kanzan chose to study *Yamato-e* painting under Kose Shōseki (1843–1919), originally a Kyoto painter of the Shijō school who was also skilled at Buddhist painting. The combination of Kanō and *Yamato-e* styles would remain the basis of Kanzan's art for the rest of his life.

Kanzan's career proceeded more smoothly than Taikan's or Shunsō's. Upon

graduation in 1892, he was appointed assistant professor at the school, and was given a rare opportunity to study and reproduce old paintings held by temples in the Kyoto and Nara areas. His works won high praise at public exhibitions, and one piece was sent off to the 1900 Paris Exposition. When the school's director, Okakura Tenshin, was forced to resign in 1898, Kanzan and his colleagues Taikan and Shunsō followed him to found the Japan Art Institute. In 1901, Kanzan was invited back to his teaching post, which he kept until 1908.

In 1903 Kanzan received an opportunity rare for a *Nihonga* painter: he was selected to study watercolor painting in Europe under the auspices of the Ministry of Education. He stayed in London for two years and then travelled to Paris, Milan, and other European cities. While in London, he held a small private show with the aid of Arthur Morrison (1863–1945), a writer and devotee of Oriental art. Meanwhile, he was busy making watercolor copies, often on silk, of European paintings he saw in museums and galleries. He even copied Leonardo da Vinci's *Mona Lisa* and Raphael's *Madonna del Cardellino* (Uffizi Gallery) and had some of his copies sent to an exhibition in Tokyo in autumn 1903.

His watercolor copies of European works demonstrate his thorough competence in this foreign art. After his return to Japan, however, his *Nihonga* works showed little radical change in style or technique, though he used Western pigments more often, as can be seen in his screen *Autumn in the Woods* (Konoma no aki) shown at the first Bunten in 1907. He spoke little of his experience in Europe, as if it had never happened. This silence contrasted sharply with his Institute colleagues, particularly Shunsō who attempted more radical experiments after his return from the West. Kanzan shared this goal somewhat, but his works, already in greater demand for a higher price, remained less bold.

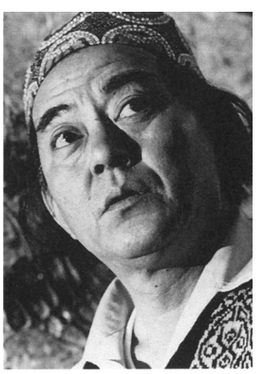
Though technically unrivalled, Kanzan often depended on Tenshin for artistic inspiration. Tenshin's death in 1913 was a grave loss to him. Three months later, Kanzan moved to a new house in Yokohama under the patronage of Hara Sankei (1868–1939). As the most encouraging supporter of the Institute and an admirer of Japanese classical art, Hara had already bought some of Kanzan's major works. He was Kanzan's most important patron and mentor for the next decade. In 1914 Kanzan joined Yokoyama Taikan in resurrecting the Japan Art Institute. He exhibited a screen masterpiece at each of the first three exhibitions of the reorganized Institute.

In 1917 he was appointed an Imperial Household Artist, the first Institute artist to receive that honor. Ironically, his relationship with Taikan began to decline, who is said to have become jealous of Kanzan's privileged status. Eventually, Kanzan even considered joining Kawabata Ryūshi when the latter left the Institute in 1928 to found his own group, Seiryū-sha.

During the last decade of his life Kanzan devoted more effort to works other than he painted for the Institute's exhibitions. The social eminence of his patrons reflects the public respect his work was accorded. The imperial household commissioned screens for the Meiji Shrine and for the Empress Dowager; the Maeda family requested a set of four handscrolls depicting the Meiji Emperor's visit to the family's residence; Kinkakuji temple in Kyoto wanted a *fusuma*; and Sir Percival David on a visit to Japan in 1922 asked him to paint a set of *fusuma* for the Imperial Room in Sanzen'in Temple in Ōhara on the outskirts of Kyoto.

(Hiroko T. McDermott)

Shimomura Ryōnosuke, b.1923
下村 良之介



Shimomura Ryōnosuke was born in Osaka to a Noh actor. He was only five when he started his formal training in Noh dancing and singing. In 1936, Shimomura chose to go to art school in Kyoto, in order to escape from the Noh studies his father imposed upon him. In 1943, he completed his study of *Nihonga* at the Kyoto Municipal School of Arts and Crafts and the Kyoto Municipal Special School of Painting.

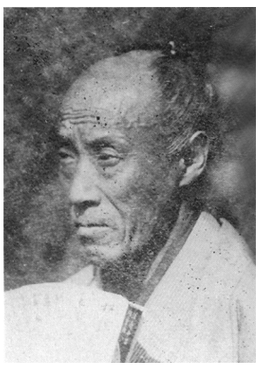
From the beginning of his art training, Shimomura's artistic temperament did not fit within the confines of the two-dimensional ink and color world of *Nihonga*. According to one anecdote, for his assignment of drawing bamboo shoots, he glued dirt onto his picture instead of painting it. Another episode has it that he and a fellow student juxtaposed the green of new leaves with the red of changing leaves to approximate the color of withered leaves; his teacher first thought that they might be color blind. Shimomura's impulse, however, was to go beyond the conventions of *Nihonga* and experiment with different ideas and media. Many of his teachers advised him not to submit his works to a juried exhibition lest they be rejected. Shimomura's ignorance of the field, while a source of a mild embarrassment, actually freed him from the burden of continuing tradition.

Shimomura was conscripted and sent to the war front after graduation. After he returned home in 1946, he supported himself by teaching. He participated in founding the Panreal Art Association (Panriaru Bijutsu Kyōkai) because he was unable to reconcile himself to what he believed was the empty beauty of *Nihonga*. The avant-garde Association's first exhibition was held in May of 1949; the members, including Shimomura and Mikami Makoto among others, were entering the most creative and energetic periods of their careers.

Since all the art supplies Shimomura had purchased during his student years had been destroyed during the war, he began to use materials lent to him by a sculptor friend. Now he was able to use real dirt in his works to his heart's content. Buying only paper and glue, Shimomura used crushed colored chalk, cheap black ink, and draftsmen's red ocher to create art with his hands and fingers. He made a great effort to rid himself of everything he had learned in school so as to create a freer form of art.

Shimomura is particularly famous for his experimental works using the subject of birds (Plate 169). Over the years, Shimomura has collected, hunted, and painted birds, with his subjects gradually evolving from specific, recognizable types to his abstracted ideal bird. His work became nationally and internationally acclaimed, shown at the first Kyoto Independent Exhibition in 1956 and the Carnegie International in 1958. Widely travelled, Shimomura has studied both the classic and indigenous art of the lands he has visited, seeking to expand his horizons beyond the confines of Japan and maintain a fresh perspective on both his subject matter and method of working.

Shiokawa Bunrin, 1801–1877
塩川 文麟



Bunrin was a major artist who spanned the period from late Edo to early Meiji. He was well suited to play a leadership role at this crucial juncture and thus enabled Kyoto art circles to forge a constructive relationship with the new Kyoto government. Bunrin was also an innovative artist eager to explore new themes and methods of painting and was as receptive to stimulating ideas derived from Ming painting as from the study of Western art. Although there are many fine examples of his work in Western collections, his contribution to the development of painting during the late Edo and early Meiji periods has been largely unappreciated in Japan.

Bunrin was born and raised in Kyoto. His father was a samurai who had been adopted by the Kubo family, attendants of Renge Kōin (originally part of the Konpira Shrine, it became independent after the Restoration and was renamed Yasui Shrine). His father died when he was twelve, and Bunrin went to live with relatives in Fushimi where, at age fourteen, he began to study painting with a local artist named Toryō. On coming of age, Bunrin also entered the service of Renge Kōin, whose abbot, Prince Takatsukasa, had in his youth studied with Hara Zaichū (1750–1837) and was fond of painting. Prince Takatsukasa therefore encouraged Bunrin to pursue his artistic ambitions and arranged for him to study with Okamoto Toyohiko (1773–1845).

Virtually nothing is known of Bunrin's early career until he emerged around the mid-1850s as a major artist invited to decorate the *fusuma* of a room in the Otsune palace and another *fusuma* in the Kōshun palace, both of the Imperial Palace. For the latter, which served as the private library of the emperor, Bunrin painted in ink and light color a peacock perched atop a tree trunk set amidst flowering shrubs. The painting, derived from Maruyama Ōkyo and Qing academic bird-and-flower painting, is so skillfully rendered that it vies with a similar work by Goshun (1752–1811). Bunrin had mastered the poetic landscape style of Toyohiko but did not confine himself to so narrow and mannered a method of painting. He made a careful study of *Yamato-e* and is believed to have copied several important handscrolls. Unfortunately, many of Bunrin's paintings that would illuminate his command of this and other genres that had been recorded by Iizuka Beiu in *Grand Survey of Nihonga* (Nihonga taisei, 1932) can no longer be traced.

Although sympathetic to the loyalist cause, Bunrin preferred to absent himself from Kyoto during the chaotic years before the Meiji Restoration. He spent much of his time exploring the storehouses of major temples in the environs of Kyoto and Lake Biwa. He became interested in the many Ming paintings owned by these temples and attempted to emulate the refinement of expression and elegance of style he found there.

Bunrin was also influenced by Western art which, after the opening of Japan, had become more accessible and more relevant. One of his horizontal paintings of Higashiyama affects the technique of oil painting which he may have seen in one of the Kyoto Expositions or in the homes of the many foreigners in the employ of the Kyoto government and Dōshisha University. Bunrin was not distracted by either the exotic aspects that fascinated many contemporary Japanese painters nor the realistic aspects that impressed Takahashi Yuichi (1828–1894) and neophyte oil painters. He regarded Western art as but another source for pictorial ideas. His series of hanging scrolls, *The Eight Views of Lake Biwa*, show with what ease and assurance he synthesized these disparate traditions.

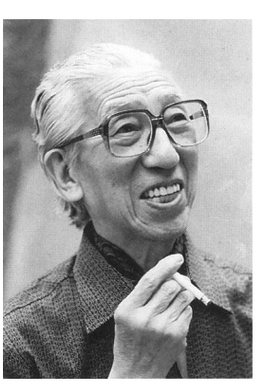
Bunrin appropriated only those elements that permitted him to portray the spatial and atmospheric effects of nature in a more convincing manner. Like Corot and the French Impressionists, Bunrin was fascinated by the way light and atmosphere could transform the shape and substance of nature. By a direct observation of nature and a perceptive use of Western techniques, he tried to produce landscape paintings of Arashiyama, of the banks of the Kamo River, and of the temples nestling at the foot of Higashiyama. To achieve evocative effects, he employed many novel techniques, such as adding indigo to ink to convey the mistiness of a summer rain; using a bluish-gold pigment (*seidei*) to heighten the glow of the firefly at night (Plate 1); using a damp cloth, derisively referred to as Bunrin's *fukin* (dishrag), to scumble the surface of freshly applied *gofun* (chalk white) to suggest haze and billowing clouds. He was no less eager to break with traditional subject matter, choosing to paint eggplants ripening in a vegetable patch over the perennial plum blossoms in snow.

Bunrin strove to create new modes of artistic expression that would nurture the innovative currents in early Meiji painting. He particularly influenced the work of Kishi Chikudō, Morikawa Sobun (1847–1902), Mochizuki Gyokusen (1834–1913), and Takeuchi Seihō. He played an equally vital role in assisting Kyoto's art circles to adjust to the changes wrought by the Meiji government, which directly affected the artists' personal lives, professional status, and sources of patronage. Bunrin was particularly adept at dealing with the local government, and under his leadership, Joun-sha served as a semi-official organization concerned with all that pertained to the arts in Kyoto. He helped vice-governor Makimura Masanao establish the Kyoto Exposition and organize the art exhibitions that were the principal features of these early fairs. He and his pupils took part in the public demonstration of painting and calligraphy that was the main attraction at the second Kyoto Exposition. When a jury system was initiated in 1875, Bunrin was appointed judge of the painting section. He did not discriminate against Western-style painters, awarding prizes that went to Takahashi Yuichi, and a local Kyoto oil painter, Tamura Sōryū (1846–1918), among others. In March 1874, he helped Joun-sha members set up what was in effect a cooperative art gallery, run by and for the artists themselves, which held monthly exhibitions and sold paintings directly to the public.

Following Bunrin's death, the leadership of his school passed to his pupil, Kōno Bairei. However, his stylistic heirs were Kishi Chikudō, the most accomplished Kyoto painter of early Meiji, and Takeuchi Seihō, who matched his skill as an art statesman, teacher, and innovative artist.

(Ellen P. Conant)

Sugiyama Yasushi, 1909–1993
杉山 寧



© Endō Jun

While still a student at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts where he studied with Matsuoka Eikyū (1881–1938), Sugiyama Yasushi had his works accepted by the Teiten in 1931 and, in 1932 his work won him a top award at the Teiten. Following his graduation in 1933 Sugiyama quickly earned a reputation

as a forward-looking artist in the *Nihonga* world. In an article written in 1936, Sugiyama expressed his interest in Western as well as Asian art. Western painters, he indicated, "are not pretentious and show their true selves as they are and I think these are some of the things we can learn from them." In this context, he expressed his enthusiasm for the work of such modern European artists as Van Gogh, Cézanne, Derain, Braque, Modigliani, and others.

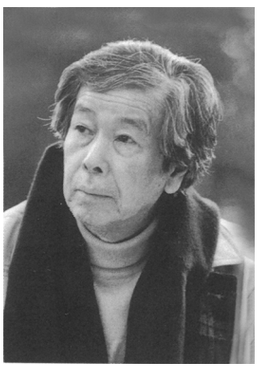
Sugiyama's early experimentation came to a close in 1937, when he fell ill for a protracted period. For a decade he produced only small works which he rarely showed publicly. He began to exhibit again in 1951: one of his paintings exhibited at the Nitten of that year, *Europe* (Europa), caused a sensation due to its unusual subject matter taken from Western mythology. *Europe* marked his return to a successful career that continued until the end of his life.

In 1959–1962, Sugiyama created semi-abstract works based on simplified compositions, such as *Heat*, 1960 (Plate 159). He returned to a more realistic mode after his trip to Egypt and Europe in 1962, when he began a series based on his experience in Egypt. After 1978, he travelled to Greece, Turkey, Egypt, and China, where he produced the many skillful sketches for which he is famous. His trips abroad resulted in imagery that evoked an aspiration for the eternal. Some critics have praised Sugiyama's work for a certain classical restraint through his use of clean contours, an ordered sense of volume, and balanced composition. Others criticized these same qualities as being "overly polite," exhibiting a "clinical cleanliness," and lacking in vital energy.

Sugiyama maintained his own interpretation of his goals, claiming that since his student days he was attracted by the idea of "pure painting." In search of what can only be expressed by "painting," he explained, he eradicated emotionalism as well as literary elements from his works: "A painting must not simply be a re-expression of what exists in actuality." Sugiyama's most important contribution may have been his ability to perfect new techniques, some of them derived from Western-style practices, which have helped to propel postwar *Nihonga* into new areas of visual exploration.

(Brenda G. Jordan and Hiroshi Nara)

Takayama Tatsuo, b.1912
高山 辰雄



©Suzuki Kaoru

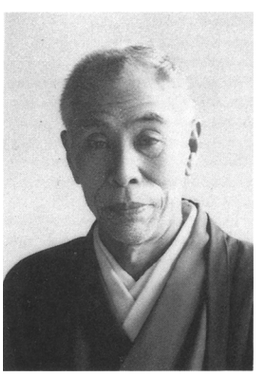
During his childhood in Ōita, one of the southernmost cities on Kyūshū island, Takayama Tatsuo would visit his friends' homes and see *nanga* paintings—so popular in Kyūshū at that time—that decorated the rooms. Another memory from his youth, in fact one of the most vivid memories Takayama had, was receiving his first set of colored pencils in elementary school. By the time he was in the fifth grade, he began to think about becoming an artist. After overcoming initial opposition from his parents, Takayama went to Tokyo where he was introduced to Ogyū Tensen (1882–1945), a former pupil of Hashimoto Gahō. Ogyū then introduced him to Koizumi Katsuji (1883–1945) who, like Tensen, was a graduate of the Tokyo School of Fine Arts (Tokyo Bijutsu Gakkō). Takayama was admitted to his teacher's alma mater in 1931 and studied *Nihonga* with Matsuoka Eikyū (1881–1938).

The years following his graduation in 1936 were times of struggle and obscurity. Takayama found himself in a world where life was increasingly unsettled and his country was at war. He was conscripted into the army but discharged for health reasons after one week. His teacher Eikyū passed away in 1938, and the works that he was able to produce during the war period were destroyed in air raids. Nevertheless, he continued to paint. In 1937 he joined the Rusō Painting Society (Rusō Gasha), which had been founded by Yamamoto Kyūjin, Sugiyama Yasushi, and three other students of Eikyū in 1934. The Rusō Painting Society provided Takayama with some sense of stability in the years that followed. In 1941, he participated in the foundation of Issai-sha, an art organization founded by former members of the Rusō group. He also showed at the exhibitions of Kokudo-kai which Kawasaki Shōko (1886–1977), Yamamoto Kyūjin, Higashiyama Kaii, and others established in 1943.

Takayama had devoted six months to a painting which was refused by the Nitten in 1946. In the midst of his disappointment over that rejection, his friend Yamamoto Kyūjin introduced him to a biography of Gauguin. Reading this book was a revelation to Takayama: he decided to paint the world as he imagined it should be. In the following year, his work imbued with Gauguinesque coloration won a top award at the second Nitten; thereafter, he regularly exhibited at the Nitten, establishing himself as a significant artist in *Nihonga*.

In the decade of Shōwas 30s (1956–1965), Takayama painted many landscapes in which he explored imagery of nature and humanity, as if probing them within his inner world. In the decades that followed, he was more concerned with the fundamental truths of life. His work has been sometimes said to be difficult, perhaps because he has never attempted to give an ultimate interpretation but has sought to make each painting a piece of truth.

Takeuchi Seihō, 1864–1942
竹内 栖鳳



Takeuchi Seihō was the quintessential embodiment of the Kyoto Painting Circle (*Kyoto gadan*). During a prolific artistic career that spanned half a century, Seihō became a powerful representative of the Kyoto art world and established himself as an artist of great political stature. "In today's painting world, if we were to find a *meijin* (master artist), it can be no one but Seihō. It seems that the flavor of the meaning and the sense of dignity embodied in the word *meijin* will become obsolete in modern times. There is a good chance that Seihō is the very last *meijin*," wrote Kaburaki Kiyokata in 1934. Inherent in the word *meijin* is the absolute mastery of technique, which enables the artist to traverse the breadth of styles freely from astute realism to playful spontaneity.

The foundation of Seihō's art was *shasei*, or sketching from life. He once said, "A painter must not talk as often as paint, must not paint as often as think, and must not think as often as face nature quietly." Seihō's *shasei* was not so much a matter of drawing the object meticulously as intensely

observing it. Seihō seemed to sketch with his mind rather than his brush, his sharp eyes grasping unfailingly the truth about nature and his heart waiting for the moment of inspiration. In his commitment to capture intimate aspects of nature, Seihō inherited the essence of the Maruyama-Shijō tradition. Yet in his emphasis on personal experience with nature, he reached far beyond the very premise of the tradition in which he was trained.

The period of Seihō's early development as an artist coincides with the emergence of *Nihonga* as modern Japanese-style painting. When Ernest Fenollosa visited Kyoto to promote his idea of new Japanese painting in 1886, young Seihō was in the audience. A few years later, as Seihō began to support himself and his wife (a daughter of the Nishijin textile family) as a painter, he found a job in the textile industry, as did many other Kyoto artists. He was employed in the design division of the Takashimaya department store for over a year, and for many more years after that Seihō's involvement in textile decoration continued. *Moon over Venice*, 1904 (Plate 43) is an example of one of Seihō's paintings used in the design of a cut-velvet triptych created by Takashimaya.

Meanwhile, Seihō busied himself investigating all styles of Japanese painting in search of a new expression. During the 1890s, Seihō assumed a larger role in educating younger generations of artists. In 1895 he began teaching at the Kyoto Municipal School of Arts and Crafts (Kyoto Shiritsu Bijutsu Kōgei Gakkō), where he became acquainted with Yokoyama Taikan who taught there for a year. He reorganized his *juku* as Chikujō-kai around 1897. By the turn of the century, Seihō's talent was widely recognized. Kishi Chikudō often proclaimed to his pupils that Seihō was the very best of the next generation.

Seihō's synthesis of Western art was daring and ambitious. In 1901, upon returning to Japan from a six-month trip to Europe, he changed the first character of his name to the more formal and correct form of *sei*. The new character incorporated the meaning "West." Regardless of whether or not Seihō expressly intended to convey "the West" in his name, his decision to correct his name demonstrated his determination to start anew. The experience in Europe dramatically affected Seihō's art, most notably in the appearance of two new themes: the lion and Western landscape. To Japanese viewers, who were accustomed to seeing stylized representations of lions, Seihō's painting, based on his sketches at a European zoo, was impressive in its realism. On the other hand, his scenes of Western landscapes such as *Ancient Castle, Rome*, 1901 (Plate 34) charmed his viewers with their lyrical exoticism. When the Kansai Art Society (Kansai Bijutsu-kai), the first *yōga* group in Kyoto, was established in 1901, Seihō was invited with Yamamoto Shunkyo to its opening celebration. Seihō even submitted a small oil painting to their first exhibition that year.

By the time the Bunten was established in 1907, Seihō's fascination with Western art had dissipated. He turned to indigenous Japanese traditions once again, creating an array of ambitious paintings which marked the emergence of a truly individual expression. Among Seihō's early Bunten entries were poetic ink paintings, realistic animal depictions, and stunningly decorative figure paintings. The impressive range of subject matter and style demonstrated both Seihō's self-confidence and self-consciousness as a leading Kyoto painter in the spotlight of the national arena. Particularly noteworthy are his ambitious figure paintings during this period, including *Sudden Shower*, 1909 (Plate 76). Seihō's interest in figures is also shown in his participation in a painting project for the ceiling of the *sanmon* gate of Higashi Honganji Temple, begun in 1910. After struggling to achieve a modern version of *tennyo*, or heavenly maidens, Seihō abandoned the project in 1915.

After mid-Taishō, Seihō turned away from figure painting and focused more exclusively on landscape and animal subjects. *Mouth of the River* (Kakō), 1918, a strikingly desolate landscape, marks the summation of the first half of Seihō's artistic career. In its combination of abstraction and realism and its display of flawless yet subtle brushwork, it distills his earlier study of various styles into a unique individual expression.

Seihō's depiction of animals was superlative. His success in this genre was a direct result of his *shasei* practice, as Seihō kept a variety of animals and birds at his house for observation. At times, Seihō represented with consummate realism not only the physical features but also the psychological character of the subject as in *Spotted Cat* (Madara neko), 1924. In contrast, *Drunken Pleasures* (Plate 60), created the same year, is an example of Seihō's flirtation with primitivism inspired by *Ōtsu-e*. Even its purposefully crude expression, however, is underlined by his virtuoso handling of brush and his fundamental understanding of the animals.

The two major sources of inspiration for Seihō in the latter half of his career were China and *haiku* poetry. Chinese scenes began to appear in his paintings during the 1920s after his two trips to China in 1920 and 1921. In works such as *Scenery of Southern China*, 1926 (Plate 142) and *Fragrant Breeze Outside the City Wall*, 1930 (Plate 143), Seihō joyously celebrated the harmony of nature and men by allowing the figures to play an active role in his painting again. Seihō is known to have composed *haiku* as early as the 1890s. Particularly instrumental in his practice was his friendship with Ōtani Kubutsu. The 23rd head of Higashi Honganji, Kubutsu was a noted *haiku* poet of the Shiki school. Throughout their long relationship, Kubutsu advised Seihō on his *haiku* composition in exchange for painting lessons. During the Shōwa period, Seihō often focused on intimate objects in the ordinary world and produced paintings which mirrored the brevity and wit of *haiku* poetry. *Lacquered Fan*, 1928 (Plate 102) is one such example. However, Seihō's works from the final few years of his life reach beyond clever simplicity and express a contemplation of life and death as exemplified by *Spring Snow*, 1942 (Plate 101). This is a visual equivalent of *haiku*, which can embrace the profound truth about the cycle of life in seemingly mundane and terse words.

Seihō's stature as a teacher was peerless in the Kyoto Painting Circle. His Chikujō-kai nurtured many who became respected artists in their own rights such as Nishiyama Suishō (1879–1958), Uemura Shōen, Nishimura Goun, and Tsuchida Bakusen. True to his own conviction, Seihō was supportive of the artists who earnestly sought to imbue the *Nihonga* world with a modern sense of individualism. When Tsuchida Bakusen and others decided to launch the Association for the Creation of National Painting (Kokuga Sōsaku Kyōkai) in 1918, Seihō found himself in a sensitive position since he occupied a prominent spot at the government-sponsored Bunten as a member of the jury. Yet, sympathetic to their cause, he not only gave them his consent to break away from the Bunten but agreed to become their advisor. With his students flourishing in their own successful careers, Seihō presided over the Kyoto art world for three decades.

During the Shōwa period, Seihō and Yokoyama Taikan were often paired as "Seihō of the West and Taikan of the East." Their contrasting personalities and artistic temperaments represented the Kyoto and Tokyo art worlds respectively. For his superb technique, Seihō was sometimes criticized as "simply a technician." In fact, it was a criticism levelled against the entire Kyoto art world often raised by those who viewed the Kyoto version of *Nihonga* as lacking in idealism and spirituality. Perhaps the most impartial assessment of Seihō's art was given by Kaburaki Kiyokata: "When I stand in front of Seihō's painting, I find myself always exclaiming '*umai*' (absolutely superb) and marvel at it from the bottom of my heart. In the case of Taikan's painting, I am moved by the vigor of his spirit but seldom compelled to utter '*umai*.'"

(Michiyo Morioka)

Tamaki Suekazu, 1897–1943
玉城 末一



Tamaki Suekazu remains an intriguing and somewhat remote figure among modern *Nihonga* painters. He died in his forties and few of his pictures survived, but those that have, such as his *Ukichi*, which was painted in 1926 during his active period (Plate 88), have often been singled out as representative of the modern and elegant spirit so much a part of Taishō culture.

Tamaki, who was closely associated with the Kyoto Painting Circle, was born in Osaka and is sometimes characterized as an "Osaka *Nihonga* painter." In his early years, Tamaki attended the Kyoto Municipal School of Arts and Crafts (Kyoto Shiritsu Bijutsu Kōgei Gakkō), and then studied further at the Kyoto Municipal Special School of Painting (Kyoto Shiritsu Kaiga Senmon Gakkō), from which he graduated in 1921. Successful with his early entries to art exhibitions in Osaka and elsewhere, he was asked in 1925 to join the group of painters active in the Association for the Creation of National Painting (Kokuga Sōsaku Kyōkai) in Kyoto. Tamaki continued to exhibit with the Association in 1926 and 1927. When the Association was disbanded in 1928, Tamaki chose to show his works with Shinju-sha, a short-lived group formed by some of the former Association members. Toward the end of his life, Tamaki was moving away from art organizations, showing infrequently, but still winning awards for his paintings in both Kyoto and national exhibitions. Tamaki was particularly proud that some of his works were chosen for the contemporary *Nihonga* exhibition in Berlin in 1931.

From his extant works, it appears that in the early phase of his career, the artist painted mainly figures, rendered in rather shadowy forms. By 1926, the time of *Ukichi*, however, Tamaki was painting with a bold contrast of colors in clear and simplified forms. His distinctive style stood in contrast to most of the paintings of his contemporaries and, despite his relative youth, he gained considerable recognition during his short lifetime.

Tokuoka Shinsen, 1896–1972
徳岡 神泉



Critics have described Tokuoka Shinsen as an artist "yearning for the source of the eternal." His paintings have a timeless, transcendent, almost supernatural quality; at their best, they are pervaded with the sense of *yūgen*, a mysterious kind of beauty that represents one of the most important ideals in classic Japanese aesthetics.

The story of Shinsen's life is one of triumph after many years of bitter disappointment. Born in Kyoto, he spent his childhood in an environment steeped in centuries of history, and his youth was devoted to the study of art. An almost instinctive awareness of traditional aesthetics that he acquired at a very young age, his solid rigorous training in the craft of painting, and a refinement of spirit acquired through repeated failure, all coalesced into an artist who painted works of subtle power and ethereal simplicity. However, it took years of persistence before he was able to achieve the recognition that his prodigious talents deserved.

Shinsen was bought up in a well-to-do family and encouraged to take up painting and Noh singing. His cherished goal was to become an artist. A chance meeting with Tsuchida Bakusen when Shinsen was about thirteen brought him to Chikujō-kai, the *juku* of Takeuchi Seihō, one of the foremost painters in Kyoto. After a year's study with Seihō, Shinsen entered the Kyoto Municipal School of Arts and Crafts (Kyoto Shiritsu Bijutsu Kōgei Gakkō) in 1910; from there, he enrolled in the Kyoto Municipal Special School of Painting (Kyoto Shiritsu Kaiga Senmon Gakkō) in 1914. His grades at both schools were outstanding; he was constantly winning awards at the annual competitive exhibitions of the School of Arts and Crafts.

Students who did well in art school, particularly in the art school exhibitions, could usually look forward to similar success in the national arena. But Shinsen, unfortunately, had a different experience. His early submissions to the Bunten, beginning in 1915, were rejected every year, and that rejection deeply troubled him. Although he initially found retreat from the world within the temples in Kyoto, he soon embarked on a life of homeless wandering, eventually settling down near Mount Fuji. He did not return to Kyoto until 1923.

Throughout this period of self-imposed exile, Shinsen continued to paint and submit work to the government-sponsored exhibitions, never with any success. Finally in 1925, after twelve years of submissions, one of his paintings was accepted by the sixth Teiten; thereafter he regularly exhibited and was received favorably at the Teiten and later the Shin-Bunten (New Bunten). By 1938, he was recognized enough to become an exhibition judge.

This was the beginning of Shinsen's mature period. His paintings of flowers reflect what came to be known as the "Teiten school of bird-and-flower painting" (*Teiten-ryū no kachō-ga*)—which harmoniously combined realist elements derived from Western-style sketching (*shasei*) and decorative elements from traditional Japanese art. Shinsen's paintings from these years have a quiet and restrained character, in which, as one critic said, "surrounded by an atmosphere of silence, one flower or the shape of a single fish reveals the mysterious secrets of the soul."

After World War II, the debates concerning the relevance of *Nihonga* in postwar Japan prompted some painters to abandon the medium altogether, and others to add Western elements, initiating a trend that was later called "Western-style *Nihonga*." Shinsen was not particularly interested in Western painting, except for such masters as Klee and Kandinsky, and did not see any conflict between the *kachō-ga* tradition and the demands of the contemporary world. Instead, he chose to explore issues of composition, form, and color. He began to take frequent trips to Nara to study ancient Buddhist art, and would often spend more time looking at the pieces than copying them into his sketchbook. *Dry Leaves*, 1958 (Plate 155) is among the brilliant examples of his work during those years. The objects in the painting seem suspended against a background which is simultaneously empty and rife with promise. Background (*jinuri*) was of great importance to Shinsen; he thought of it not as blank, unused space, but rather as expressive of limitless possibilities in the universe. It specified nothing, but allowed for everything. He had derived this idea in part from his study of Nara Buddhist images, and sought to give his own work a similar transcendent quality where art and spirituality intersect.

Tomioka Tessai, 1836–1924
富岡　鉄斎



When Tomioka Tessai was appointed as an Imperial Household Artist (*Teishitsu gigeiin*) in 1917 at the age of eighty-one, he remarked:

> I have primarily pursued Confucian studies since my youth and have specialized in painting since the Meiji Restoration. However, never did I intended to achieve fame through painting. Therefore, I have distinguished myself from professional artists by not submitting my painting to a [juried] public exhibit.

By his own definition, Tessai was a *bunjin* (scholar) for whom poetry and calligraphy represented accomplishments more significant than painting. Following the literati ideal, Tessai incessantly inscribed his paintings and urged viewers to read his inscription in order to understand the painting. Extolling the virtue of "reading ten thousand books and travelling ten thousand miles," he amassed a huge personal library, travelled from Kyūshū to Hokkaidō and climbed Mount Fuji, and transformed his learnings and experiences into his paintings. In the end, however, it was his extraordinary achievement as an artist rather than as a scholar that made Tessai's name world renowned.

Tessai was the second son of a Buddhist robe merchant in Kyoto. His birthday was December 19th, the same as that of Su Shi (1036–1101), the great Chinese scholar, a coincidence Tessai touted proudly. Because he was hard of hearing since childhood, his parents encouraged him to pursue a livelihood other than that of a merchant. Hoping to become a scholar, he pursued Japanese and Chinese studies and began to learn how to paint by the mid-1850s. Besides Kubota Setsuyō and Ōsumi Nankō, from whom Tessai seems to have received painting lessons, he may have sought artistic guidance at various times from elderly *bunjin* artists. It is most likely, however, that Tessai was essentially self-taught, using the works of other artists as models.

The person who helped Tessai in the early years of his career was Ōtagaki Rengetsu (1791–1875), the poet-nun famous for her elegant calligraphy. Around the mid-1850s or earlier, Tessai lived with Rengetsu and assisted her with her pottery-making. After Tessai opened a fledgling private *juku* at Rengetsu's old residence in Shōgoin village in 1862, she promoted his work by having him paint on her calligraphy compositions, which were in great demand. One such example shows Tessai's gentle depiction of plants accompanying Rengetsu's graceful writing. Through Rengetsu, Tessai met in 1868 Tanomura Chokunyū (1814–1907), a leading exponent of the literati painting tradition. For the next forty years, Tessai and Chokunyū's paths crossed frequently. Yamanaka Seiitsu (1823–1885), a scholar-calligrapher, is also believed to have been influential, encouraging the young Tessai to pursue painting to supplement his income as a scholar. By the beginning of the Meiji period, Tessai was known as a Confucian scholar and poet.

After a brief career as a Shintō priest at Ōtori Shrine in Osaka during the late 1870s, Tessai was forced to return to Kyoto to take care of his mother. The following two decades saw Tessai playing an active role in the Kyoto art world. In 1886, with Kishi Chikudō and others, Tessai was appointed as a member of the jury for the exhibition of the Kyoto Young Painters' Study Group (Kyoto Seinen Kaiga Kenkyūkai). In 1892, Tessai and Kōno Bairei were jurors at the Kyoto-City Exhibition of Arts and Crafts (*Kyoto-shi bijutsu kōgeihin ten*). Tessai received similar appointments for the next ten years, such as at the fourth Domestic Industrial Exposition (*Naikoku kangyō hakuranka*i) in 1895 and the second Exhibition of New and Old Art (*Shinko bijutsuhin ten*) in 1896. From 1894 to 1904, Tessai taught ethics (*shūshin*) part-time at the Kyoto Municipal School of Arts and Crafts (Kyoto Shiritsu Bijutsu Kōgei Gakkō). Although he rarely showed in public exhibitions, Tessai was not a recluse. Through his consistent participation in the Kyoto art scene during the later half of the Meiji period, Tessai developed friendships with Mori Kansai, Kōno Bairei, Kishi Chikudō, and Imao Keinen (1845–1924). In 1902, when Hashimoto Gahō visited Kyoto, Tessai carved a seal for him and presented it with his own painting.

Tessai drew from many sources in developing his art. Although he embraced *bunjin-ga* wholeheartedly, he investigated not only the Chinese and Japanese literati traditions but also learned from Kanō-school painting, *Yamato-e*, Rinpa style, *ukiyo-e*, and even experimented with Western-style painting during his long artistic career. Tessai's syncretic approach was not unusual for an artist of his time. Working within the *bunjin-ga* tradition, which valued self-expressiveness more than technical achievement, Tessai was in a position to explore even more resolutely a wide spectrum of painting for the sole purpose of nurturing his individual style.

Around the turn of the century, Tessai's fame as a painter began to rise. Entering the Taishō period, his art began to take on a special significance for younger artists. Ono Chikkyō, who was one of the founding members of the Association for the Creation of National Painting (Kokuga Sōsaku Kyōkai) wrote:

> I have admired Tessai's painting since my youth.... Tessai appears to practice in his painting his thoughts deriving from traditional Eastern ideas.... What moves us more strongly, however, is the expression of his painting itself.... In other words, it makes us feel the working of Tessai's mind in pursuit of beauty, brush by brush, line by line. In this very experience, we find a sense of reality.

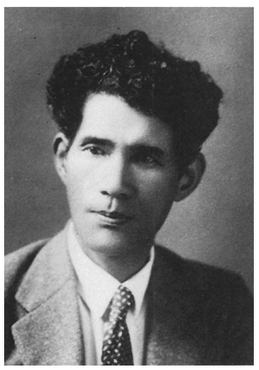
What Chikkyō described as "a sense of reality" was the unmistakable presence of Tessai's powerful personality that expressed itself in painting. For many artists striving to realize the modern notion of individualism during the Taishō period, Tessai's art represented an exemplary model to admire and emulate.

The attention his painting received at the time must have invigorated Tessai. His oeuvre produced during the 1910s and 1920s until his death in 1924 marks the flowering of his art. Accents of vivid colors reminiscent of *Yamato-e*, lavish use of ink, and dynamic brushwork are notable hallmarks of his late style. Although Tessai never acknowledged himself as a professional painter, he clearly enjoyed painting and was grateful that he could make his living by doing so. To quote Chikkyō again: "Tessai probably did not realize that his art projected a feeling of modernity. He earnestly sought to educate people and propagate Eastern thought through his painting. Yet always present in that process was another Tessai, the talented painter. Tessai himself may not have recognized this facet of himself."

Bunjin-ga as exemplified by Tessai's art is nearly unattainable in the context of modern life. Indeed, it is only with great effort that we can understand and appreciate Tessai's painting in the manner intended by the painter. Ultimately, it is "Tessai, the talented painter" who eloquently transcends time and space.

(Michiyo Morioka)

Tomita Keisen, 1879–1936
富田 渓仙



Tomita Keisen's blend of traditional Japanese styles within the framework of a highly individualistic outlook earned him the reputation of being unconventional, a characterization that has persisted in modern criticism. Keisen had connections in the Kyoto art world through his teacher Tsuji Kakō and had an important patron in Naiki Seibei (1878–1955). However, he chose to remain aloof, pursuing his studies of art, literature, and religion, which led him on journeys philosophical as well as physical. Experimenting with a number of styles, from Kanō to Shijō and from Buddhist painting to *nanga* to Zen painting, Keisen managed to forge a coherent style that revealed its various influences without dissolving into a showcase of disconnected techniques. Keisen spoke of his disdain for "complacency," which he said destroyed tradition. His concept of "tradition" as a constantly evolving phenomenon must have appealed to Yokoyama Taikan, who included Keisen in the Reorganized Japan Art Institute (Saikō Nihon Bijutsu-in) that he formed in 1914.

Born the fifth son of a Japanese noodle manufacturer in Hakata (present-day Fukuoka) in 1879, Keisen's interest in painting began early. At the age of twelve, Keisen began studying Kanō-school painting with Kinugasa Tankoku (d.1912), formerly the official painter who had served the local lord. Keisen also worked with another local artist, Ueda Tekkō (1849–1914). During this period, Keisen first saw the works of Sengai Gibon (1750–1837), a Zen monk known for his whimsical painting style, who had lived at Hakata's Shōfukuji Temple during his final years. Sengai's work held a lifelong fascination for Keisen, although this interest did not manifest itself stylistically until late in his career. When the family business closed in 1896, Keisen moved to Kyoto, where he thought he would have more freedom to experiment.

Finding Tsuji Kakō ended Keisen's search for a more experimental teacher. Kakō had been a student of Kōno Bairei, an important figure in the formation of what came to be known as the Kyoto Painting Circle (*Kyoto gadan*). Kakō accepted Keisen as a resident student, at first treating him more as a servant than a budding artist. But Kakō soon recognized Keisen's talent and introduced him to the leading figures of the Kyoto art world. That gained Keisen the patronage of Naiki Seibei, a son of Kyoto's mayor, a collector of ancient art, and a proponent of the development of modern styles rooted in Japanese tradition. Naiki supported Keisen steadily from 1902 to 1912.

These were exploratory years for Keisen, both philosophically and artistically. Naiki's home became the setting for regular lectures on Christianity as well as discussions about Buddhism and Daoism. Keisen also studied independently and travelled widely. Over the years, he visited sites along the entire length of the Japanese archipelago, and in 1909 went to Taiwan and China. During an early trip to Wakayama in 1902, he was introduced to John Ruskin's philosophy of painting, which inspired him in its advocacy of historical knowledge and direct observation of nature. Keisen also met Tomioka Tessai, who piqued his interest in *nanga*. Throughout this decade of exploration, Keisen sought to achieve a new form of expression. The result was a style ripe with traditional Japanese elements such as the soft, expressive lines of *nanga* and Shijō origins and the use of vivid mineral pigments associated with *Yamato-e* and Rinpa joined by the effect of keen observational skills.

Keisen's "groping period," as it is commonly called, prepared him for attention in the art world. In 1912, his work not only won him his first acceptance to the Bunten, but it also impressed Yokoyama Taikan. A year or so later, when Taikan visited Kyoto to seek out artists to participate in the Reorganized Japan Art Institute, Keisen was one of the first to accept the offer. Although Keisen was associated with the Institute for about twenty years, he chose to remain in Kyoto. Joining the Institute did not affect Keisen's artistic identity. Rather, it furthered his ongoing commitment to building new traditions of Japanese art while maintaining his artistic freedom.

(Julia S. Yenne)

Tsuchida Bakusen, 1887–1936
土田 麦僊



At a time when the Japanese art world was longing for change and eager to experiment, Tsuchida Bakusen distinguished himself as a brilliant and daring talent, who seamlessly interwove the legacy of Japanese aesthetics with innovations derived from a careful study of contemporary Western art. His paintings, with their balance of intelligence and passion, spirituality and sensuality, demonstrate a brilliant mastery of artistic techniques and a sensitive understanding of the human heart. His indefatigable striving for artistic freedom and individuality of expression led him to become a founding member of the Association for the Creation of National Painting (Kokuga Sōsaku Kyōkai).

Bakusen was born on the island of Sado, north of Niigata Prefecture. His father was a farmer by profession, but involved himself in local politics and held a position of some authority in the village. Bakusen showed his artistic talents early; he used to visit a nearby temple and copy the paintings in its collection. Bakusen went to Kyoto in 1903 and joined the *juku* of Suzuki Shōnen (1848–1918). Soon growing tired of the old-fashioned nature of teaching there, Bakusen joined the *juku* of the younger but increasingly prominent master Takeuchi Seihō by the end of the next year.

Seihō's pedagogical style differed markedly from Shōnen's: sketching classes, monthly research meetings, sessions of mutual criticism, and regular art-theory lectures were included in Seihō's curriculum. In this new and supportive environment, Bakusen made good progress: at the Exhibitions of New and Old Art (*Shinko bijutsuhin ten*), in which his work was first accepted in 1905, he won awards in 1906, 1907, and 1909. Bakusen also received the third prize at the 1908 Bunten held in Tokyo. While his early work tended to depict scenes of rural life, imbued with an air of innocence and nostalgia, Bakusen's mature work showed little evidence of those qualities.

In 1909, the Kyoto Municipal Special School of Painting (Kyoto Shiritsu Kaiga

Senmon Gakkō) was founded; Bakusen and Ono Chikkyō, his fellow pupil at Seihō's *juku*, enrolled in the adjunct course (*bekka*). Bakusen, somewhat uneasy with authority figures, felt a great deal of affinity with Nakai Sōtarō (1879–1966), the art history instructor who taught him that art was a matter of free creativity, a pursuit of truth about nature and human beings with the individual as its subject.

It was fortunate for Bakusen that he was able to participate in two short-lived but important avant-garde groups: Le Chat Noir, formed in 1910 by the region's *yōga* artists and *Nihonga* painters, including Bakusen, Chikkyō, and Hata Teruo (1887–1945); and Le Masque, that Bakusen and others formed in 1911. These groups may seem to have been minor elements in the history of *Nihonga*, but they allowed younger artists in Kyoto, including Bakusen himself, to familiarize themselves with Post-Impressionism that breathed new life into the closed atmosphere of the Kyoto art world. Furthermore, Bakusen's experience with the two groups prepared him for the future founding of the Association.

Bakusen's work during this period, such as *Island Women* (Shima no onna), 1912, reveal an obvious debt to Gauguin, but they also possess a solid sense of composition and confident individuality that are entirely Bakusen's. In his depiction of country scenes especially, he was well aware of the harsh realities he had observed in his childhood; a special sympathy for his subject is very much present in his work. Perhaps this is why he was also attracted by Van Gogh who perceptively captured the essential tragedy of ordinary lives. However, Bakusen was also fascinated by Cézanne; the sensuality of Renoir and the simplicity of Rousseau held appeal for him as well.

The 1913 exhibition of works by the *yōga* painter Kishida Ryūsei (1891–1929) at once impressed and frustrated Bakusen a great deal. As he saw it, the materials used in *Nihonga* were not particularly well-suited to depictions of the nude, the primary subject of the Ryūsei exhibition. Bakusen countered this problem by returning to East Asian art for models, looking at Heian Buddhist images, early-Edo genre scenes, and Chinese Tang-dynasty academic bird-and-flower paintings. Bakusen's experimentation with themes of traditional Japanese and Chinese art in order to push beyond the limitations of *Nihonga* were fresh and imaginative. Unfortunately, they were not the kind of painting that the government-sponsored Bunten was interested in promoting. The alienation he felt from the mainstream art world led to the founding of the Association for the Creation of National Painting in 1918.

From about this time, Bakusen's work began to aspire to a "beauty, in which individuality is downplayed; a quiet, restrained sort of beauty," in his own words. His *Spring* (Haru), 1920, a painting of a mother and child, assumed an almost religious atmosphere, somewhat reminiscent of early Renaissance painting, which he had first encountered in the progressive magazine *Shirakaba* (White Birch) in 1916–1917. Bakusen admired these paintings very much, for he saw in them the same sort of lyricism, repose, and sensitive treatment of subject that he had found so compelling in Heian Buddhist art.

In 1921–1922, Bakusen travelled to Europe with Ono Chikkyō and Nonagase Banka (1889–1964), studying firsthand the European art he had seen in reproduction for so many years (Figure 5.12). He made numerous watercolor sketches and studied tempera techniques. The period of exuberance and liberation that Bakusen enjoyed during his trip, however, was overturned by the Great Kantō Earthquake in 1923 and accompanying financial difficulties for the Association. These economic pressures, together with the discord among the founding members led to the dissolution of the *Nihonga* division of the Association in 1928.

In the time between 1928 and his death in 1936, Bakusen established himself at the Teiten (reorganized from the Bunten in 1919) and continued to rework the themes that had appeared in earlier paintings such as *maiko*, *Ohara-me*, and birds and flowers, achieving a new radiance and psychological intensity. In 1933, Bakusen took a two-month trip to Korea, where he spent his time sketching genre scenes and figures. *The Flat Bed*, 1933 (Plate 81), which shows a pair of Korean women in traditional dress, was based on sketches from that trip.

Two tragedies devastated Bakusen in 1934. His younger brother, Kyōson, died in May, and his nephew died just months later. In 1935, the art world was stirred by the reorganization of the Teiten. This caused additional difficulties for Bakusen, who disagreed with his master Seihō on the issue of the Teiten. These sad events began to take a toll on his health. In September, Bakusen again journeyed to Korea for two months. Although he was bothered by a stomach disorder, he drove himself unrelentingly to make sketches for future paintings, which he never finished. Bakusen died of pancreatic cancer in June 1936.

Tsuji Kakō, 1870–1931
都路 華香



In 1914, Tsuji Kakō received the second prize at the eighth Bunten for *Clouds and Cranes* (Kan'un yakaku), a pair of screens that depicted two large cranes flying against a background of clouds in the sky. Nishiyama Suishō (1879–1958) thought the painting was symbolic of Kakō's ideal: to exist like quiet clouds and live like wild cranes, unconcerned about the world below. "Difficult and inflexible but honest and sincere" was the frequent assessment of Kakō's personal character by those who knew him well. Kakō was "neither as quick-witted nor technically accomplished as Seihō," in the words of Kakō's most celebrated pupil, Tomita Keisen; he was not politically or socially as adept as Seihō, either. Kakō lived in the shadow of his colleague Seihō and has not received the recognition his art deserves.

Kakō was born in Kyoto to a *yūzen* textile artisan, who encouraged his son to pursue a career in painting. In 1880, Kakō became a pupil of Kōno Bairei. Because of his father's occupation, Kakō may have been involved in textile design as early as the 1880s; not long after, he began to make preparatory drawings (*shita-e*) for the Takashimaya department store. His best-known work in this field is *Cherry Blossoms at Mount Yoshino* (Yoshinoyama), 1904, one part of a cut-velvet triptych whose other two compositions were produced by Seihō and Yamamoto Shunkyo (Plates 41–44).

Like many other artists of his time, Kakō studied various traditions of Japanese painting besides Shijō style during his early years. At one point, he was particularly impressed by Hashimoto Gahō: his paintings dating from the late 1890s reveal a bold, strong brushwork inspired by the Kanō school. However, the decorative aesthetics and relaxed brush style reminiscent of the Rinpa school are most strongly characteristic of Kakō's mature style. Before the Bunten was inaugurated in 1907, Kakō established a reputation in Kyoto through his steady participation in the Exhibitions of New and Old Art (*Shinko bijutsuhin ten*) in Kyoto. Between 1904 and 1907, he was also

busy publishing an art magazine, *Garin*, with his colleagues from Bairei's *juku*, Seihō, Kikuchi Hōbun (1862–1918), and Taniguchi Kōkyō (1864–1915). While young Kakō admired Seihō the most, Yamamoto Shunkyo and Kawai Gyokudō were his two closest friends.

Kakō's fascination with water began toward the end of the Meiji period. His exploration of this theme resulted in a multitude of representations that ranged from ink monochrome to compositions executed in bright colors. Among the brightly colored works, some are more decorative, as *Calm Waves*, c.1920 (Plate 118), while others are more contemplative, as *Waves (Green)*, late 1900s–early 1910s (Plate 119). The extraordinary sense of freedom conveyed by the style of these two works, especially *Waves (Green)*, demonstrates that Kakō was one of the foremost modernists and individualists of his generation.

Kakō was quite bold as a colorist. As early as late Meiji, he created a stunning "red" landscape which was, as one viewer described, completely untraditional in its use of bright orange-red. Kakō explained the painting as a representation of the setting sun reflecting upon the surface of a mountain covered with red maple leaves. His accomplishment as colorist, however, is equal to the superb quality of his ink painting, which is characterized by an expressive use of tonal gradation. In his late years, he preferred to work with paper to achieve the best results from ink.

Kakō's practice of Zen meditation is widely known. He began training in 1899 under the Zen master Mokurai at the Kenninji temple and practiced it throughout his life. It is tempting to ascribe the meditative quality of his work to his Zen discipline. On the other hand, it may have been his Zen training that allowed Kakō to be himself, outspoken in manner and unmanipulative in nature. Remembering his weak constitution and the nervous temperament that troubled him as a youth, Kakō attributed the physical and psychological well-being of his adult years to Zen.

Kakō's involvement with the government-sponsored exhibitions lasted barely more than ten years. Although his paintings were consistently accepted at the Bunten, starting with its first exhibition in 1907, his work did not receive a high award until the mid-1910s, and he was never appointed a jury member. His unwillingness to conform to the taste of the time as well as his aloof and detached personality may have delayed his advancement and recognition within the Bunten. The 1920 Teiten was his last participation in the official exhibitions; he exhibited a pair of paintings of Korean scenes, a subject which became central to the work of his late years.

(Michiyo Morioka)

Uemura Shōen, 1875–1949
上村 松園



Uemura Shōen is the most widely recognized woman painter in the history of modern Japanese painting. The first woman to raise *bijin-ga* to the status of a major theme in *Nihonga*, Shōen paved the way for many other woman painters to follow.

Shōen was born to a shop-owner who retailed tea leaves in Kyoto. Her decision to study painting was unusual in early-Meiji society in which young girls of her class were expected to learn sewing and other domestic skills in preparation for adulthood. Shōen's father had died before she was born. Raised by a working mother in a fatherless household, Shōen's life was less controlled by patriarchal family expectations. Besides Shōen's self-determination, the personal strength of her mother Naka, who provided her daughter with unconditional support, facilitated Shōen's initial entry into the painting world and her ensuing success. Later in her life she acknowledged this with the highest gratitude an artist could express: "My mother, who gave birth to me, also gave birth to my art."

Although she chose a painting career for her own life, Shōen was not a "liberated" woman in the modern sense. Even her single parenthood that was a result of her liaison with the notable *Nihonga* master and her first teacher, Suzuki Shōnen (1848–1918), for which Shōen was temporarily ostracized, was not her deliberate challenge to the established norms of society. It was rather her personal conviction that the feminine ideal existed in fulfilling the role of wife and mother. Shōen's adherence to traditional ideas of womanhood is manifested unequivocally in her painting. As exemplified in *Waiting for the Moon*, 1926 (Plate 83), Shōen's women are idealized images, embodiments of the traditional feminine virtues of gentleness and grace. As members of the upper class, they demonstrate the Confucian ideal of self-restraint, revealing neither deep emotion nor strong individuality. As a woman artist portraying her own gender, Shōen rejected the representation of women as objects of amorous desire commonly found in *ukiyo-e*. Only rarely does the courtesan or geisha theme appear in her oeuvre. In such examples, the emphasis is on the elegance and dignity of women, not their erotic potential. The flawless technique which characterizes Shōen's work is symbolic of her moral commitment to the act of painting.

Competing in a world dominated by men, Shōen in her daily life was consumed by the activities of painting. As captured in her son's memory of their life at the end of Meiji, "The entire second floor of the house was used for my mother's studio and bedroom. My mother stayed upstairs day and night except for mealtime.... She did nothing but paint, while the everyday household chores were taken care of by my grandmother and aunt." Shōen carried the traditionally masculine role as a provider, supporting her family by her art. The ideal womanhood she could not fulfill in her own life Shōen realized in her paintings. Eventually, her steady success at the government-sponsored Bunten earned her a social and economic status equal or even superior to her male colleagues.

Shōen's literature-inspired paintings of the Taishō period depict images of women in love; they form a group of the most emotional works in her oeuvre. The appearance of such a work must be understood in the context of the period. With the changing artistic climate and social advancement of women during early Taishō, Shōen's *bijin-ga* were often criticized as too old-fashioned, technically superb but superficial doll-like representations of women with excessive emphasis on their physical beauty. Her paintings of fictional heroines clearly represent her attempt to fulfill the demand of the time to be more expressive on the one hand and to create more "humanized" images of women on the other. While younger artists during the late Taishō period explored female subjects in terms of broad human reality rather than lofty ideals, Shōen strove to create *bijin-ga* which symbolized truth, goodness, and beauty. Although she may have experimented with *yōga*-inspired realism early in her career, it never became a significant part of her painting style.

Shōen adhered to orthodoxy, steadily ignoring the more contemporary trends in *Nihonga* after the mid-Taishō period. Yet, pursuing her traditional ideal, she achieved a surprisingly modern visual statement during the last decade of her life. In such highly acclaimed works as *Late Autumn*, 1943 (Plate 84), Shōen demonstrates her sensitivity to formal design, while portraying a common woman engaged in an ordinary domestic chore. This theme appears in Shōen's oeuvre only during the early half of the 1940s, paralleling the escalating Japanese involvement in war.

During the last decade of her life, Shōen

lived a comfortable family life surrounded by her grandchildren. Her son, Shōkō (b.1902), also became a successful *Nihonga* artist specializing in the bird-and-flower genre. Remembered by a contemporary writer, Inoue Yasushi, as "more beautiful than any image in her painting," Shōen in her old age was a graceful figure who imparted a quiet sense of dignity. A lifetime resident of Kyoto, Shōen embodied in her painting and in her person the refined taste and grace associated with traditional Kyoto culture.

(Michiyo Morioka)

Watanabe Seitei, 1851–1918
渡辺 省亭



A colorful and talented figure in the world of late-Meiji art, Watanabe Seitei (Shōtei) was famous for his paintings of birds and flowers, as well as his designs for textiles and cloissoné, woodblocks, and printed books. Along with Kawanabe Kyōsai and his teachers, Kikuchi Yōsai (1788–1878) and Shibata Zeshin (1807–1891), Seitei was one of the first Meiji artists to have his works collected by European art lovers.

The son of a shipping merchant in Edo, Seitei was adopted into the Watanabe family. He was apprenticed at a pawnshop at the age of thirteen, but his artistic talents led him to train under a prominent Tokyo artist, Kikuchi Yōsai, who worked in both the Kanō and *Yamato-e* styles. Seitei became dissatisfied with what he considered to be the slow process of advancement in Yōsai's studio and worked briefly with the highly respected and eminent artist Shibata Zeshin.

In 1875, Seitei came to know Matsuo Gisuke of the Industry and Commerce Company (Kiritsu Kōshō Kaisha), who had a significant impact on the artist's career. A flower design he created for the company won a flower-crest award at the first Domestic Industrial Exhibition (*Naikoku kangyō hakurankai*) in 1877. When his work won the bronze medal at the Paris Exposition in 1878, Seitei travelled with Matsuo to Paris, where he spent the next three years studying Western-style painting. In fact, Seitei was the first *Nihonga* painter to study in Europe.

After returning from Europe, Seitei applied the Western techniques he had learned to Japanese art and became known as a talented painter of bird-and-flower subjects. His style incorporated close observation of nature with both Western and traditionally Japanese manners of representation. This specialization in birds and flowers may have resulted from his collaboration with Namikawa Sōsuke (1847–1910) for whom Seitei created designs for cloissoné works (Plates 46 and 47).

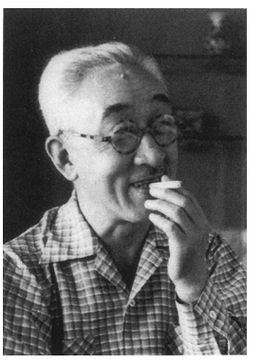
To Kaburaki Kiyokata and other artists of the next generation, Seitei's work possessed *iki*, a quality found in the works of the most sophisticated Edo artists and writers. *Iki* is difficult to define, but it combines the quality of "chic" with a certain thoughtful understatement. In 1918 Kiyokata wrote that Seitei's works were typically *Edokko* ("child of Edo"), and similar in fashion and style to the works of the Rinpa artist Sakai Hōitsu (1761–1828), as well as those of Zeshin, Kubota Beisen, and Takeuchi Seihō. In 1925, Kaburaki commented again on Seitei's ability to maintain the *Edokko* sense of *iki*, but also added that Seitei, in some cases, "smells too much of the West."

Seitei wrote several books on painting, including the three-volume compilation *Birds and Flowers* (Kachō gafu) published in 1890. Supported by Wada Tokutarō, an owner of the Shun'yōdō and a well-known publisher, Seitei also founded and edited the journal, *Bijutsu sekai* (Art World) in 1890. In this magazine, famous works were reproduced in woodblocks; many of these designs for the reproductions were done by Seitei himself. He did not, however, limit himself to bird-and-flower subjects. In a magazine called *Kokumin no tomo* (People's Friend), Seitei illustrated *The Butterfly* (Kochō), a novel by Yamada Bimyō (1868–1910), using a live model to create a controversial nude of the female protagonist Kochō.

Seitei's technical facility and fresh approach to the traditional subject of birds and flowers were greatly appreciated both in Japan and abroad. He received awards for his paintings in the second Domestic Industrial Exposition in 1881, as well as in international expositions, including those in Amsterdam in 1883 and Chicago in 1893. As was the case with Kyōsai and Zeshin, Seitei's high reputation in Japan, however, did not last much beyond his lifetime.

(Brenda G. Jordan and Hiroshi Nara)

Yamaguchi Hōshun, 1893–1971
山口 蓬春



In the postwar *Nihonga* world, Yamaguchi Hōshun represented, according to one critic, "the forefront of modernism in *Nihonga*." With a realistic eye, he commanded a complete mastery of traditional techniques yet deftly exploited Western sketching skills.

Hōshun was born in Matsumae, Hokkaidō, where his father worked in the local branch of the Japan Bank. When Hōshun was seven, the family moved to Tokyo. Hōshun never became proficient enough with the abacus to follow his father's profession. Instead he studied *yōga* at the Hakuba-kai Institute (Hakuba-kai Kenkyūjo), unbeknownst to his parents, while he was in middle school. In 1914, he entered the Western-painting course at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts (Tokyo Bijutsu Gakkō), but transferred to the *Nihonga* course in 1918.

After graduating first in his class in 1923, Hōshun became active in the government-sponsored Teiten. He also participated in the exhibitions held by the New *Yamato-e* Society (Shinkō Yamato-e-kai), which was led by his teacher at the school, Matsuoka Eikyū (1881–1938). In 1929, Hōshun was appointed professor at the newly founded Imperial Art School (Teikoku Bijutsu Gakkō, presently Musashino Art University). In 1930, Hōshun founded the interdisciplinary group called Rokuchō-kai, with two other *Nihonga* painters—Fukuda Heihachirō and Nakamura Gakuryō—and three *yōga* artists—Kimura Shōhachi, Makino Torao, and Nakagawa Kigen.

Hōshun severed his relationship with his teacher Eikyū in 1935, issuing a short manifesto that declared the termination of any and all relationships with Eikyū as well as with any restrictive art organizations. It marked the end of Hōshun's endeavor to update the tradition of *Yamato-e* and the beginning of his renewed focus on Western art. Hōshun was fascinated by Cézanne and his approach to nature—observing nature through a perception free from any extraneous elements like emotion and mood. He first tried to eliminate narrative elements

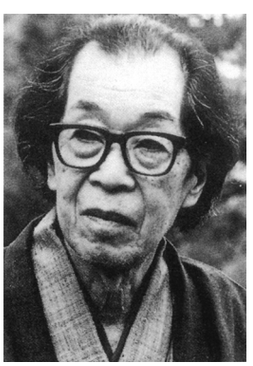
from his work and, by the late 1940s, his composition and his arrangements of color planes showed Cézanne's influence (Figure 7.7). Hōshun also adopted and combined aspects of Fauvism, Surrealism, and Cubism; studied works by Braque and Matisse; and advocated a thick application of pigments.

Hōshun strove to make *Nihonga* more relevant to contemporary life in what was an increasingly cosmopolitan and internationally oriented society. He admitted that *Yamato-e* had been able to touch the core of the prevailing thought of its day, but it could not, he claimed, speak in the same way to the sensitivities of the contemporary era. For Hōshun, the goals of *Nihonga* were not to serve merely as a source of nostalgic sentiments and traditional culture as exemplified by contemporary *Yamato-e* practices.

While Hōshun understood the importance of the Western-derived notion of artistic individuality, he espoused the traditional Japanese approach that emphasized both individuality and technique. He used to say that true individuality must come out from a "narrow gate," the "gate" being the mastery of a particular style of painting, which one is then able to move through to express one's individuality.

(Brenda G. Jordan and Hiroshi Nara)

Yamamoto Kyūjin, 1900–1986
山本 丘人



Yamamoto Kyūjin was one of the most important *Nihonga* painters in the early postwar years. Through his talents and force of will, he helped to revive the *Nihonga* movement and introduce fresh elements into a style of art that seemed to many Japanese at the end of the Pacific War exhausted of artistic vitality, and perhaps politically compromised.

Kyūjin dropped out of high school in 1915 and transferred to the Tokyo Metropolitan Crafts School (Tokyo Furitsu Kōgei Gakkō) to study metalwork (*chōkin*). In 1918, he saw an exhibition of the Association for the Creation of National Painting (Kokuga Sōsaku Kyōkai), which completely changed his view on *Nihonga*. He realized that *Nihonga* could be as innovative as the works by Tsuchida Bakusen and Murakami Kagaku rather than a medium of rehashed antiquated materials and themes handed down through generations. Thus, in 1919, after his graduation from the crafts school, he enrolled in the *Nihonga* course at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts (Tokyo Bijutsu Gakkō). His teacher Matsuoka Eikyū (1881–1938) was a powerful influence on him. With his early successes at the government-supported Teiten, Kyūjin was able to become a teacher himself at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts in 1944; one of his students was Kayama Matazō, often considered the most respected *Nihonga* painter of the contemporary period.

Although he had studied under academic teachers, Kyūjin advocated new and innovative trends. In 1934, five of Eikyū's students, including Kyūjin and Sugiyama Yasushi, started the Rusō Painting Society (Rusō Gasha). Dissatisfied with the trends in *Nihonga*, Kyūjin wrote in the group's manifesto: "when one would like to express seriously the thoughts, sensibilities, and sentiments coming from living in the modern era in which science and culture develop rapidly, it is necessary to revolt against the *Nihonga* of yesterday and to massacre materials." The Rusō Painting Society lasted only four years, but after the war, in 1948, Kyūjin, Fukuda Toyoshirō, and six others banded together to form the group called Creative Art (Sōzō Bijutsu). As its name suggests, the group was dedicated to creativity and the idea of moving forward with a "contemporary spirit," in order to give *Nihonga* a positive sense of direction in the postwar period.

Numerous stories state that Kyūjin was not a man who would meekly concede to the status quo. As a student under Eikyū, he repeatedly caused trouble by smoking, not sitting properly, or bluntly speaking his mind. Several times he was ordered out of the class by his teacher, although reconciliations would soon follow. Eikyū, in fact, is thought to have recognized the potential in his difficult student. Other stories about Kyūjin suggest that it was because he was disgusted with the status quo that he resigned from the position of a judge for the Nitten at the age of 48.

Kyūjin's reputation rests primarily on his landscapes. Many paintings after 1967 were imaginary scenes, often created from sketches made at different times and locations (Plates 160 and 161). Kyūjin would compose the sketches into an integrated whole, as if composing a poem. He often accompanied his paintings with his own poem-like descriptions, recalling his deep interest in poetry.

(Brenda G. Jordan and Hiroshi Nara)

Yamamoto Shunkyo, 1871–1933
山元 春挙



Yamamoto Shunkyo loved climbing mountains. Reminiscing about his trip to the Japan Alps where he camped and sketched with his students, Shunkyo wrote:

> At the mountaintop, the movement of mist and cloud is unpredictable. One moment they envelop the whole mountain, then the next moment, they are gone. Suddenly the large rocks emerge once again before our eyes.... The sense of majesty and loftiness conveyed by this scene... can be imagined only by those who have actually experienced it.

It was this sublime experience with the mountains that Shunkyo sought to represent in his magnificent landscape paintings such as *Four Seasons*, 1913 (Plate 113).

Shunkyo was born in 1871 in Shiga Prefecture. After studying briefly with Nomura Bunkyo (1854–1911), he became a student of Mori Kansai around 1885. During the 1890s, Shunkyo emerged as a talented young artist through his participation in the Kyoto Exposition (*Kyoto hakurankai*), the Exhibition of New and Old Art (*Shinko bijutsuhin tenrankai*), and the exhibitions of the Japan Art Association (Nihon Bijutsu Kyōkai). In 1899 he was made a teacher at the Kyoto Municipal School of Arts and Crafts (Kyoto Shiritsu Bijutsu Kōgei Gakkō), and a decade later he was appointed to the Kyoto Municipal Special School of Painting (Kyoto Shiritsu Kaiga Senmon Gakkō). Shunkyo made himself especially conspicuous during the early 1900s, when most of the teachers generally wore traditional kimonos and he was impeccably dressed in dark Western suits. Paintbrushes casually peeked out of the pocket of his jacket; sometimes he wore a single rose on his lapel. Shunkyo's fashionable appearance along with his stature as a young successful artist made him a popular teacher among the students.

Not surprisingly, given his modernist appearance, Shunkyo's early influences were photography and *yōga*. He was one of the earliest *Nihonga* artists to become interested in photography as an art form.

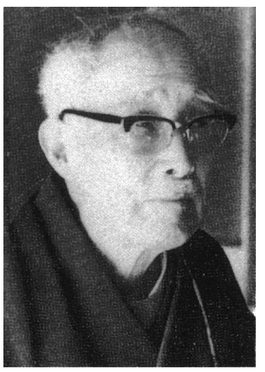
As early as 1889, Shunkyo learned to use a camera and made himself into an accomplished photographer, later becoming the president of an amateur photography group in Kyoto. He was particularly fond of snow scenes, as evidenced by the many snowscapes he painted. He began to experiment with oil painting around the turn of the century. Initially, he may have sought guidance from Sakurai Chūgō and other Kyoto artists who founded in 1901 the Kansai Art Society (Kansai Bijutsu-kai), the first *yōga* organization in Kyoto. After Asai Chū (1856–1907), a prominent *yōga* artist, moved to Kyoto in 1902, Shunkyo became acquainted with him.

The study of *yōga* and photography revealed to Shunkyo not only the Western principle of perspective but also the portrayal of light and atmosphere. Shunkyo also valued the observation of nature through *shasei* (sketching) practice. Taking a hint from a photographic film, Shunkyo invented a device on which he could continuously unroll a horizontal scroll, to sketch a panoramic scene. At the same time, the traditional brush method played an important role in Shunkyo's art. He investigated brush techniques associated with Chinese landscape paintings of the Song dynasty. Through the synthesis of Western realism, *shasei*, and the study of past traditions, Shunkyo, more than anyone else of his generation, accomplished a sense of objective realism in his landscape painting. Dispatched by the Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce to visit the St. Louis Exposition, Shunkyo travelled to the United States in 1904. *Snow in the Rockies*, 1905 (Plate 44), produced for the Takashimaya department store, is one of his early landscapes which clearly manifests the emergence of a unique, individual style.

Although realism was one of the goals Shunkyo sought to achieve in his art, he warned against a blind pursuit of scientific objectivity which he believed would only result in the mechanical reproduction of nature. Particularly in his late years, Shunkyo emphasized the spiritual aspect of art. He wrote in 1931: "Art blossoms only in the realm unattainable by science or beyond the human reason." For Shunkyo, landscape represented a genre superior in grandeur to figure painting.

(Michiyo Morioka)

Yasuda Yukihiko, 1884–1978
安田 靫彦



Yasuda Yukihiko's long and illustrious artistic career is closely bound to the history of the Japan Art Institute (Nihon Bijutsu-in). Recognized and encouraged by Okakura Tenshin within the last decade of Tenshin's life, Yukihiko emerged as an imaginative history painter and one of the major second-generation leaders of the Institute during the Taishō period. His Shōwa-period oeuvre is regarded by many as the ultimate realization of Tenshin's vision and therefore a perfect embodiment of the Institute's ideal.

Born the fourth son of a restaurant owner in Tokyo, Yukihiko began his training in 1898 with Kobori Tomoto (1864–1931), a *Yamato-e* painter and one of the original Institute members. Artistically precocious, Yukihiko immediately founded the Shikō-kai group with other pupils. Having lost both his parents before the age of thirteen, Yukihiko found a nurturing ground for his art through lively discussions and mutual critiques among young artists. Yukihiko met his closest friends and colleagues in this group: Imamura Shikō, Maeda Seison, and Kobayashi Kokei. (Shikō-kai changed its name to Kōji-kai after Shikō joined the group in 1900.) In 1907, one of Yukihiko's preparatory drawings of a historical subject caught Tenshin's attention at the study group of the Japan Art Institute. Tenshin invited Yukihiko and Shikō to Izura, where they painted side by side with Yokoyama Taikan, Hishida Shunsō, and other artists affiliated with the Institute. His encounter with Tenshin and his experience at the Izura workshop profoundly affected young Yukihiko. Tenshin had the highest expectations of Yukihiko's art. He later secured Hara Sankei's (1868–1939) financial backing for Yukihiko so that the young artist could concentrate on painting without other obligations.

During the Taishō period, Yukihiko took part in the founding of the Reorganized Japan Art Institute (Saikō Nihon Bijutsu-in) and blossomed as a history painter. Yukihiko's mature style which emerged during the 1930s and 1940s is generally known today as "neo-classicism" (*shin-koten-shugi*). Art historian Kawakita Michiaki defines it as a modern expression based on the individualistic interpretation of all the artistic traditions of Japan, including not only native *Yamato-e* but also *kanga* (Chinese-style Japanese painting) and *bunjin-ga* (literati painting). Under this broad definition, its exact meaning and significance must be further examined and clarified in the context of each artist's oeuvre. Yukihiko's "neo-classicism" is exemplified by his masterpiece from 1940–1941, *Military Camp at the Kise River* (Kisegawa-jin), a portrayal of the Minamoto brothers, two esteemed military heroes of twelfth-century Japan. It is a style of utmost refinement and elegance characterized by smooth, wire-like lines and exquisite colors within a perfectly balanced composition. As a renewed expression of early *Yamato-e* tradition and entirely free from any trace of Western influence, Yukihiko's style of this period is believed to reflect the Japanese sense of beauty in its purest form.

Yukihiko's lifelong involvement with history painting, of both Japanese and Chinese themes, made him one of the most erudite artists of his generation. Researching and collecting art objects in preparation for a painting, Yukihiko became a noted connoisseur of traditional art. Above all, his expertise on the calligraphy of the priest Ryōkan (1758–1831) is well known. Seeing the reflection of his own aesthetic sensibility in Ryōkan's unassuming yet resilient style, Yukihiko studied and emulated Ryōkan throughout his life and himself became an accomplished calligrapher. Moreover, Ryōkan's simple unworldly lifestyle appealed to Yukihiko, whose aspirations in life were sometimes hampered by fragile health.

A quiet, mild-mannered man, Yukihiko enjoyed warm relations not only with his colleagues at the Japan Art Institute but also with distinguished men of other fields, such as the writer Tanizaki Jun'ichirō (1886–1965). The theme of friendship appears in *Portrait of Imamura Shikō*, 1916 (Plate 87) and *Evening Entertainment by the Kamo River*, 1932 (Plate 137). The former portrays Yukihiko's best friend and colleague during his youth, while the latter represents an imaginary gathering of three Edo-period scholars. The artist's personal affection for the subjects imbues these paintings with an informality and intimacy uncommon in Yukihiko's oeuvre.

(Michiyo Morioka)

Yokoyama Misao, 1920–1973
横山 操



After World War II, as Japanese society regained its economic prosperity, *Nihonga* saw the emergence of a new audience and collectors from various walks of life. In the dawn of this new era, it was significant that Yokoyama Misao held his first solo exhibition at a department store. An innovator in many areas, Yokoyama gained popularity through painting numerous works on the definitive subject of Mount Fuji, perhaps affecting the future direction of the *Nihonga* market.

Yokoyama was born in 1920 in a small town in Niigata Prefecture facing the Japan Sea. He was an illegitimate child who was adopted soon after his birth by Yokoyama Shūhei and his wife. According to people who knew him, it was only at the time of his conscription in 1940 that he learned, to his shock, about his real parents. At the pinnacle of his popularity Yokoyama began telling people that he was the son of his father's mistress and that his stepmother had named him Misao, which means chastity, as retribution for her husband's infidelity. Stories about his unfortunate life, including his contemplation of suicide over the circumstances of his birth, became well known during his lifetime.

At the age of 14, Yokoyama went to Tokyo to become an artist. He served as a live-in apprentice under Ishikawa Gazan, a painter who ran a design concern, and studied painting while he helped make posters and block copies. He was originally interested in *yōga*, but in 1939 enrolled in the night course of the *Nihonga* department at the Kawabata Painting School (Kawabata Gagakkō). As soon as the following year, Yokoyama won Kawabata Ryūshi's attention and was accepted by the Seiryū-sha exhibition, making an assured start as a painter. However, because of the intensified state of war, Yokoyama was drafted into the infantry and spent five years fighting in China. He was held for more than four years as a prisoner of war by the Soviets in Kazakhstan, where he was forced to mine coal in the bitter cold. He returned to his home town in the early part of 1950, and soon went to Tokyo in order to see Seiryū-sha's spring exhibition. Ten years had passed since his first acceptance by the exhibition. He was already thirty years old.

Yokoyama returned to Ishikawa Gazan's household; while working for the painter-designer again, he also designed neon signs to make a living. His huge neon advertisements in downtown Tokyo soon drew the attention of many people. Painting on large surfaces, making bold pieces to attract people's interest, and drawing quickly were aspects of Yokoyama's art that were probably developed during this period.

Continuing to show work every spring and fall at Seiryū-sha's exhibitions, Yokoyama attracted Ryūshi's attention and became a leading figure among the young painters, although this soon became a source of friction between Yokoyama and other Seiryū-sha members. During this period, he exhibited a number of figure paintings full of the feelings of everyday life, all of which he later burned.

Yokoyama's signature style was established at his first solo exhibition held in January 1956. He measured the size of the gallery's walls in advance and planned his works accordingly to cover the walls; the results were such large-scale works as *Blast Furnace* and *River* (Plates 164 and 165). He reportedly procured soot from a public bath-house furnace and mixed it with glue in a bucket to make paint, lacking the funds to acquire the art supplies necessary to produce works of such huge scale. However, financial difficulties aside, Yokoyama may well have intended to overcome the "sophistication" of *Nihonga*. While Ryūshi refuted *Nihonga* as the art for the *tokonoma* (painting alcove), Yokoyama further rejected the fictive nature of painting that his teacher still maintained; by bringing the ugliness and brutality of real life into painting, he attempted to create works charged with monumentality.

His 1956 painting on the subject of the eruption of Sakurajima won the Seiryū Prize, the top prize offered by Seiryū-sha, and it established Yokoyama as an innovative artist of the new generation. The very next year, he witnessed the fire of the five-tier pagoda in Ueno, which he depicted in the charred image called *Pagoda*. However, his gigantic works and attention-stealing style provoked growing resistance among his fellow members. In 1962, Yokoyama was instructed to reduce the size of a new painting about the eruption of Mount Tokachi because it was larger than the painting of his master, Ryūshi. The incident led him to leave Seiryū-sha, despite his deep admiration for Ryūshi.

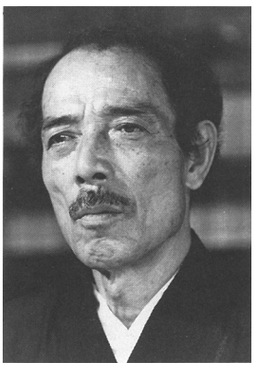
Following Yokoyama's life, one cannot but recognize that the painter was forced to change his system of values many times, feeling betrayed by things he believed in. How severely shocked he must have been, when he learned of the secret of his birth; when the militaristic nationalism drilled into him was refuted by his Communist education in the Soviet Union; and when, on his repatriation, his Communist belief was discredited by McCarthyism. He had only his own emotional strength to depend on throughout his life. Art was the one place that always welcomed him unconditionally; yet he had to leave his teacher whom he respected like his own father, as if rebelling against him. One suspects that these events were the source of the intense sense of isolation he carried with him his whole life.

The following year he had a solo exhibition in which he presented ink paintings depicting his home town. These silenced the critics of his previous large-scale works, who had denounced him for not producing the color of black by using traditional ink. It was after this exhibition and during his close friendship with Kayama Matazō that Yokoyama entered the phase in which he seemed to revert to traditional *Nihonga*, repeatedly painting such stereotypical subjects as Mount Fuji. His Fuji paintings—embellished with gold leaf and bright red and thus called "Red Fuji"—enjoyed immense popularity in the art market. Although painting them as requested, Yokoyama in reality was attempting to eradicate the "sacredness" accompanying the traditional theme of Mount Fuji. He also greatly enjoyed teaching *Nihonga* students at Tama Art University from 1965.

During a trip to Italy in 1964, Yokoyama collapsed from a heart attack. He recovered and continued to paint, and in 1966, even managed to visit China, where he had once been sent as a soldier. In April 1971, Yokoyama collapsed again. When it was determined that the right side of his body was prematurely paralyzed, he learned to use his left hand to paint some works for an exhibition. Two years later, he died in Tokyo.

(Kojima Kaoru)

Yokoyama Taikan, 1868–1958
横山 大観



The name of Yokoyama Taikan is probably the most familiar of all *Nihonga* artists, with his work frequently illustrated in Japanese school textbooks. To some, not appreciating Taikan virtually equals disliking *Nihonga*. Taikan had an ability to create paintings which spoke to, even helped shape, Japanese cultural identity. Ironically, however, the very greatness of his legend has tended to obscure the rich idiosyncrasies of his artistic genius, a talent impossible to separate from his times.

Born the eldest son of a lower-ranking samurai family in Mito in present-day Ibaraki Prefecture, Taikan watched his family adjust to the changing times, losing samurai stipends and turning the hobby of mapmaking into the means of making a living. When Taikan was ten, his father was hired by the Ministry of the Interior and the family moved to Tokyo, where his uncles' cartography school was located. He had hoped to study engineering at the Tokyo Imperial University to carry on the family interests, but failed the entrance examination due to a technicality. He instead entered the Tokyo English School to study English, graduating three years later in 1888.

While at the English school, Taikan did well in art classes and studied pencil drawing from Watanabe Bunzaburō (1853–1936) for six months. His interest in art became more serious when he learned about the opening of the Tokyo School of Fine Arts (Tokyo Bijutsu Gakkō). He briefly took painting lessons from Yūki Masaaki (1834–1904), a Kanō-school painter and prospective instructor of the new art academy. This time, despite his limited training, he passed the exam and entered the school's first class in 1889.

According to his own account in *Taikan on Painting* (Taikan gadan, 1951), Hashimoto Gahō, the chief instructor of painting at the school, was impressed enough by the young student's originality to promise him conditionally a teaching job at the school after his graduation. But because his overall grade average was low (Taikan not having bothered to study for his academic classes), he went to teach at the Kyoto Municipal School of Arts and Crafts (Kyoto Shiritsu Bijutsu Kōgei Gakkō) instead. After just a year, which he had spent mostly copying the classics at temples rather than teaching in the classroom, Taikan fled back to Tokyo to teach at his alma mater. In 1898, when Okakura Tenshin, his mentor since student days, was forced to resign his directorship of the school, Taikan resigned in sympathy and became a member of the Japan Art Institute (Nihon Bijutsu-in) that Tenshin founded. From that time on, his career was closely associated with the Institute which, to Taikan, was inseparable from Tenshin's cause.

The term *mōrō-tai*, or "hazy style," was originally a derogatory label used to describe the style that rejected line in favor of broad washes of gradated color. It was a style used by Taikan and his closest colleague, Hishida Shunsō, from about 1899 to 1909. The term later came to signify modernity as practiced by the artists of the first phase of the Institute. Furthermore, *mōrō-tai* elicits the image of Izura, a town on the rugged shore of Ibaraki Prefecture, where the Institute and its core members retreated from Tokyo during the time of the organization's financial difficulties in 1906. *Mōrō-tai*, in its associations with this romantic dedication to an artistic cause, made Taikan an important artistic pioneer.

The story becomes more complicated, however, when one notes that the negative response to *mōrō-tai* was limited to Japan, and that Taikan and Shunsō were, at least to some extent, directing these works towards foreign viewers. During the *mōrō-tai* decade between 1899 and 1909, Taikan and Shunsō travelled extensively around Japan and, by using Tenshin's contacts, spent six months in India and a year and a half in the United States and Europe in 1903–1905. Exhibitions in Calcutta, New York, Boston, Washington, D.C., and London paid for their travel expenses, and even allowed them to send money back to the Institute. They continued to paint for exhibitions abroad even after their return. Indeed, though it can be argued that *mōrō-tai* was an experimental phase which subsequently allowed Taikan to experiment with greater stylistic freedom, the amorphousness of the sometimes murky and "hazy" style began to disappear as Taikan's artistic stature grew in Japan.

From 1909, back in Tokyo with his prestige growing as a judge of the government-sponsored Bunten, Taikan's work blossomed. He abandoned the atmospheric overall washes of *mōrō-tai* and turned to more traditional subject matter. He painted in a plurality of styles and in a variety of formats: expounding in painterly juxtapositions of color, as in his 1911 hanging scroll *Mountain Path* (Plate 51); combining classical literati and Rinpa styles in such works as the 1916 screens *Sakuemon's House* (Sakuemon no ie); and responding to the Northern Song painter Mi Fu (1051–1107) in his sonorous ink paintings. His most famous work from this period, *The Wheel of Life* (Seisei ruten) was a 36-meter scroll in ink, which was created the same year as the Great Kantō Earthquake of 1923.

In response, artists, writers, and critics all offered their divergent views on Taikan. Some, like the writer Natsume Sōseki (1867–1916), applauded his originality. Conservative critics, however, decried him for his basic inability to draw and for his role as leader of the "unorthodox." One discerning critic saw two sides to him—a dull and clumsy sincerity and an aloof transcendent hermit—"not at all in conflict." To his advocates, the power of an inspired and very individual expression was possible *because* of his innate lack of technique.

In 1914, Taikan and Shimomura Kanzan broke from the Bunten to reestablish the Institute which had virtually collapsed a decade earlier. The newly reorganized Institute offered to the elite, through its own exhibition, Inten, an alternative to the more populist Bunten. Taikan influenced younger talented artists such as Imamura Shikō and Yasuda Yukihiko. His attempt to oust Hayami Gyoshū from the Institute for his hyper-realism around 1920 and his objection to Gyoshū's experiment as antithetical to the aesthetic purpose of *Nihonga* are well known. Another famous incident, Kawabata Ryūshi's defection in 1928, reveals Taikan as the authoritative father figure against whom the precocious young artist had to rebel. On the other hand, artists like Ogawa Usen, who practiced the literati style, made their name at the Institute with Taikan's support.

Taikan's relationship with the media and government became most symbiotic during the militaristic prewar Shōwa period. As cultural ideologue, Taikan publicly pronounced his views on the superiority of Japanese culture. In a speech to the Hitler Jugend in 1938 in Tokyo, after citing "nationality," "tradition," and "nature," he argued the value of the innate spirituality of *Nihonga* against what he viewed as the banality of realist-based Western painting. In 1940, in commemoration of the 2600th-year anniversary of the nation's founding, Taikan gave a solo exhibition of a series of twenty paintings, ten "mountain" (Mount Fuji) and ten "sea" views. The proceeds of 500,000 yen went to the military to pay for fighter planes, named "Taikan," at a well publicized ceremony at the Haneda airport. His work, which had represented unorthodoxy fifteen years earlier, was praised at this exhibition for having become "classical" by one critic. During this period, Taikan would speak of the importance of the spirit (*tamashii*) and the soul (*kihaku*) in his nationalistic speeches, which were repeated

by his critics who discussed his works.

After Japan's surrender, Taikan was questioned for his wartime role. Following a successful interview in defense of his activities, Taikan entertained some of the officials of the Occupation at a lavish geisha party. Some months later, he presented the wife of General MacArthur with one of his paintings of Mount Fuji. Some are puzzled by the quick reversal of this ardent nationalist. However, time and again, in the course of his long struggle to define a national painting style, he can be seen to have sought understanding and approval from the West.

Taikan is a paradox. His life and art are full of contradictions. The puzzle goes beyond the impossibility of defining how much he was a product or a contributor to his times. For a man portrayed as almost totalitarian, there is a certain dissonance, a denial of closure, in Taikan's work. In his early paintings, in which his choice of subject alone challenged social debate, the direct, questioning gaze of the figures deny the probity of the question being asked. In his Taishō work, tension arises from his stretching the boundaries of traditional subject matter with the audacity of his eccentric style. In his later Mount Fuji paintings, which were conceived as a part of an ongoing series, no one Fuji was to be definitive: rather, he sought to render the symbol anew each time. Although his work was certainly uneven, Taikan had the ability to liberate the public's imagination. Perhaps Taikan's greatest paradox lies in the attempt to define an artist's relationship to inspiration.

(Miriam Wattles)

Notes to the Reader

1. Names

Japanese names are presented in the traditional fashion, with the family name first, followed by the given name or the "artist name." Exceptions are made for those who primarily reside outside Japan; their names appear in the Western manner, with the given name first.

Painters and other cultural figures are frequently mentioned, after the first reference in the text, by their "artist names" rather than their family names, which is the customary practice in the field of *Nihonga* both in Japan and the West; thus Kawanabe Kyōsai and Okakura Tenshin may be referred to as Kyōsai and Tenshin in the text. Those who do not use "artist names" are usually referred to by their family names; thus Yokoyama Misao is Yokoyama.

Macrons are used to indicate long vowels in Japanese names and words such as Kyūjin and *yōga*. Commonly known city names (e.g., Tokyo, Osaka, Kyoto, and Kobe) are referred to without macrons throughout the publication.

2. Periodizations

A. Japanese eras

Nara, 710–794
Heian, 794–1185
Kamakura, 1185–1336
Nanboku-chō, 1336–1392
Muromachi (Ashikaga), 1392–1568
Momoyama, 1568–1600
Edo (Tokugawa), 1600–1868
Meiji, 1868–1912
Taishō, 1912–1926
Shōwa, 1926–1989
Heisei, 1989–present

B. Chinese dynasties

Tang dynasty, 618–907
Song dynasty, 960–1279
Yuan dynasty, 1271–1368
Ming dynasty, 1368–1644
Qing dynasty, 1644–1912

3. Geographical names

Honshū
  the main island of Japan
Hokkaidō
  the northern island of Japan
Kansai
  areas including Kyoto, Nara, Osaka, and Kobe
Kantō
  areas including Tokyo and its neighboring prefectures
Kyūshū
  the southern island of Japan
Shikoku
  the southern island of Japan, east of Kyūshū

4. Frequently used Japanese terms

bijin-ga
  painting of beautiful women (*bijin*)
bunjin-ga
  literati painting
Bunten
  The Ministry of Education Art Exhibition (*Monbushō bijutsu tenrankai*)
funpon
  modelbooks
fūzoku-ga
  genre painting
juku
  private teaching ateliers
kachō-ga
  bird-and-flower painting
Kanō
  painting school originated by Kanō Masanobu (1434–1530)
kanten
  government-sponsored exhibitions
Kobiki-chō Kanō
  one of the four Kanō academies; established by Kanō Naonobu (1607–1650)
Maruyama
  painting school originated by Maruyama Ōkyo (1733–1795)
Nihonga
  Japanese-style painting
Nitten
  Japan Art Exhibition (*Nihon bijutsu tenrankai*)
nanga
  literati painting
Rinpa
  painting style originated by Tawaraya Sōtatsu (d.1643?) and Ogata Kōrin (1658–1716)
sansui-ga
  traditional landscape painting
shasei
  sketching from life
Shijō
  painting school originated by Goshun (1752–1811)
tehon
  examples
Teiten
  Exhibition of the Imperial Academy of Fine Arts (*Teikoku Bijutsu-in tenrankai*)
Tosa
  a *Yamato-e* school originated by the Tosa family in the Muromachi period
ukiyo-e
  genre painting developed during the Edo period
Yamato-e
  Japanese painting developed in the Heian period
yōga
  Western-style painting

Bibliography

This bibliography is organized as follows:

1. General References in Western Languages
   A. Dictionaries and Directories
   B. Books
   C. Exhibition Catalogues
2. General References in Japanese
   A. Books
      1) Dictionaries and Directories
      2) Series (*Zenshū*)
      3) Books
   B. Exhibition Catalogues
3. Artists

Unless otherwise noted, entries are arranged alphabetically by author, and then by title.

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Index

Works of art are indicated by the figure and/or plate numbers.

Abstract Expressionism, 67
Agency of Culture (Bunkachō), 91
Ajanta, 315
Akai Shinsei, 300
Akasaka Detached Palace. *See* Imperial Palace
Akutagawa Ryūnosuke, 312
Alma-Tadema, Sir Laurence, 27
Amano Kō, 32
Amsterdam Exposition (1883), 329
Anderson, William, 23, 116
Andō Hiroshige, 40, 239
Andō Hiroshige III, 300
Andō Nakatarō, 32
Angadō, 294
Aoibashi *Yōga* Institute (Aoibashi Yōga Kenkyūjo), 304
Aoki Kōha, 310
Aoki Mokubei, 253
Aoki Senkyō, 305
Aoki Shigeru, 311
Aoyama Detached Palace. *See* Imperial Palace
Arai Kin'ya, 106
Araki Jippo, 110, 290
Araki Kan'ichi, 290
Araki Kankai, 290
Araki Kanpo, 17, 31, 34, 37, 87, 92, 138, 290; Pl. 25
Araragi, 296
Army Art Exhibition (*Rikugun bijutsu ten*), 254
Art Culture Association (Bijutsu Bunka Kyōkai), 300
Art Informel, 67, 291
Art Research Institute (Bijutsu Kenkyūjo), 98–99
Asahi (newspaper), 31, 47, 99
Asai Chū, 31, 85, 309, 331; Fig. 3.7
Asahi Hakuzan, 143
Asiatic Society of Japan, 23, 116
Association for New Artists (Shin-Bijutsu-jin Kyōkai), 292
Association for the Creation of National Painting (Kokuga Sōsaku Kyōkai), 83, 85, 97, 98, 105, 106–7, 197, 213, 216, 291, 292, 298, 299, 309, 315, 318, 319, 323, 324, 325, 326, 327, 330
Atomi Kakei, 17
Authentic Fellowship Society (Seiha Dōshi-kai), 37, 38, 97

Bairei. *See* Kōno Bairei
Baitei Gasō (Uryū Masayasu), 121
Bakusen. *See* Tsuchida Bakusen
Bastien-LePage, Jules, 27
Beisen. *See* Kubota Beisen
Bi no kuni (magazine), Fig. 5.7
Bigelow, William Sturgis, 23, 24 (n.11), 28, 53, 102, 301, 319
bijin-ga, 41, 108–9, 111, 184–93, 328
Bijutsu sekai (magazine), 329
Bing, Samuel, 78
Blake, William, 106
Bonnard, Pierre, 66
Boulanger, Gustave, 27
Bowie, Henry P., 312
Braque, Goerges, 322, 330
Breton, André, 300
Brinkley, Frank, 32
British Museum, 23, 51, 116, 152, 250, 310
Bruegel, Pieter, 70
Buddhism, 20, 130
bunjin-ga. *See nanga*
Bunrin. *See* Shiokawa Bunrin
Bunten (Ministry of Education Exhibition; *Monbushō bijutsu tenrankai*), 29, 36–38, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 56, 56 (n.1), 81, 85, 87, 93, 94, 96–97, 98, 101, 103, 105, 106, 108, 162, 163, 179, 184, 185, 187, 198, 204, 224, 242, 248, 290, 291, 294, 297, 298, 299, 301, 303, 304, 306, 308, 309, 310, 312, 313, 315, 316, 318, 319, 323, 324, 326, 327, 328, 333

Carnegie International, 320
Castiglione, Giuseppe (Lang Shining), 138
Century Club, New York, 297
Cézanne, Paul, 51, 66, 72, 105, 106, 223, 313, 318, 322, 327, 329
Chacha (Lady of Yodo Castle), 194
Chicago World's Fair (1893). *See* World's Columbian Exposition
Chikamatsu Monzaemon, 309
Chikkyō. *See* Ono Chikkyō
Chikudō. *See* Kishi Chikudō
Chikujō-kai, 42, 105, 294, 323, 324
Chiossone, Edoardo, 22
Chōbunsai Eishi, 108
Chūō bijutsu (magazine), 295
Claudel, Paul, 50
Collin, Raphael, 27
Conder, Josiah, 16, 90, 91, 306
Corot, Camille, 33
Craftsmen of the Ministry of the Imperial Household (*Kunaishō kōgeiin*), 92
Creative Art (Sōzō Bijutsu), 65–66, 67, 70, 292, 307, 330
Cubism, 64, 291, 314, 330

Daoji, 294, 299
Date Yasuke, 92
David, Sir Percival, 320
Delacroix, Eugène, 59
Domestic Industrial Expositions (*Naikoku kangyō hakurankai*), 19, 27, 31, 32–33, 78, 90, 94, 290, 293, 302, 303, 305, 306, 315, 325, 329
Domestic Painting Competitive Exhibitions (*Naikoku kaiga kyōshinkai*), 76–77, 78, 79, 135, 302, 303, 306, 312
Dōmoto Inshō, 47, 55, 68, 83, 92, 105, 234, 291; Figs. 5.4, 7.8; Pl. 121
Dōshisha University, 321
Dowager Empress Shōken, 203
Dubuffet, Jean, 72, 302
Dürer, Albrecht, 52
Dury, Leon, 19

Eastern Painting Competitive Exhibition (*Tōyō kaiga kyōshinkai*), 303
Eastern Painting Society (Tōyō Kaiga-kai), 79
Educational Museum (Kyōiku Hakubutsukan), 86
Eien. *See* Iwahashi Eien
Eishō-sha, 76
Elisséeff, Serge, 50
Emperor Go-Daigo, 255
Emperor Go-Mizunoo, 230

Emperor Kōmei, 34
Emperor Meiji. *See* Meiji Emperor
Emperor Shōwa. *See* Shōwa Emperor
Emperor Taishō. *See* Taishō Emperor
Exhibitions of New and Old Art (*Shinko bijutsuten*), 80
Exhibitions of New and Old Art (*Shinko bijutsuhin ten*), 76, 77, 299, 308, 315, 318, 325, 326, 327, 330
Exhibitions of Old Art (*Kanko bijutsukai*), 78, 80, 306
Exposition Secretariat (Hankurankai Jimukyoku), 90

Fauvism, 64, 292, 330
Federation of Art Organizations (Bijutsu Dantai Renmei), 58
Fenollosa, Ernest F., 14, 16, 22, 23, 24 (n.11), 25, 29, 31, 53, 79, 80, 86, 89, 92, 100, 102, 104, 134, 135, 136, 137, 293, 301, 302, 306, 319, 323
Field Museum, Chicago, 32
Fisher Gallery, Washington, D.C., 297
Fontanesi, Antonio, 100
Francis, Sam, 67
Free Painting Research Institute (Jiyū Kaiga Kenkyūjo), 103
Freer Art Gallery, 302
Fudō-sha, 311
Fujikake Shizuya, 301
Fujishima Takeji, 47, 223; Fig. 5.6
Fujishima Tsuneoki, 302
Fujita Tsuguji, 59, 60
Fukada Yasukazu, 106
fukko Yamato-e (restored *Yamato-e*), 18
Fukuchi Fukuichi, 26, 27, 28, 35 (n.4)
Fukuda Heihachirō, 56, 66, 105, 218, 233, 270, 273, 291–92, 329; Pls. 109, 120, 154
Fukuda Toyoshirō, 58, 61, 66, 67, 254, 273, 292, 300, 330; Pls. 138, 157
Fukui Kōtei, 295
Fukushima Hōun, 303
Fukuzawa Ichirō, 300
Fukuzawa Yukichi, 93
Futaba-kai, 293

Gahō. *See* Hashimoto Gahō
Ganku, 18, 139, 308
Gantai, 133, 308
Gardner, Isabella Stewart, 23
Garin (magazine), 328
Gauguin, Paul, 39, 51, 72, 105, 106, 322, 327
Gejō Keikoku, 79, 92
Gérôme, Léon, 27
Gion Seitoku, 108
Giotto, 106
Gleyre, Charles, 27
Gong Xian, 299
Göring, Hermann Wilhem, 58
Goseda Hōryū, 290, 297
Goshun, 18, 38, 76, 294, 321
Goun. *See* Nishimura Goun
Goya, Francisco, 59, 298
Gu Kaizhi, 52, 250, 310, 313; Fig. 5.14
Guérin, Charles François Prosper, 265
Guimet, Émile, 20, 124, 306
Gyokudō. *See* Kawai Gyokudō
Gyokushō. *See* Kawabata Gyokushō
Gyoshū. *See* Hayami Gyoshū

Haga Tōru, 67
Hakō. *See* Irie Hakō
Hakuba-kai, 30, 304; Hakuba-kai Institute (Hakuba-kai Kenkyūjo), 329
Hakuju-kai, 238
Hakushin-sha, 83
Hakuyō-sha, 310
Hamao Arata, 28, 37, 86, 92
Haneishi Kōshi, 87
Hara Sankei (Tomitarō), 91, 294, 298, 310, 313, 320, 331
Hara school, 18
Hara Zaichū, 18, 321
Hara Zaisen, 76, 77, 84, 85
Harada Naojirō, 31
Harris, Townsend, 127
Haryū Ichirō, 73
Hase Nobuatsu, 18
Hasegawa Tōhaku, 307
Hashimoto Gahō, 16, 23, 25, 26, 27, 29, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 37, 38, 39, 82, 86, 87, 89, 92, 93, 100, 102, 136, 150, 242, 290, 292–93, 300, 302, 304, 305, 306, 319, 322, 325, 327, 333; Figs. 3.2, 3.6; Pls. 23, 38
Hashimoto Kaikan, 293
Hashimoto Kansetsu, 45, 59, 92, 99, 105, 209, 260, 293–94; Pls. 99, 144
Hashimoto Meiji, 64, 86; Fig. 7.5
Hata Teruo, 106, 327
Hayami Gyoshū, 52, 53, 56, 103, 215, 230, 294, 318, 333; Pls. 104, 105, 116
Hayashi Tadamasa, 33
Heian Shrine, 144
Heigo Painting Society (Heigo Gakai), 309
Heihachirō. *See* Fukuda Heihachirō
Heimin shinbun (newspaper), 317
Hidari Jingorō, 122
Higashi Honganji, 20, 30, 311, 323
Higashiyama Kaii, 64, 86, 112, 269, 295, 322; Pl. 153
Hinode shinbun (newspaper), 31, 104
Hirafuku Hyakusui, 41, 86, 87, 181, 204, 295–96, 317; Pls. 73, 95
Hirafuku Suian, 181, 295
Hiraizumi Chūsonji, 173
Hirao Hachisaburō, 99
Hirayama Eizō, 78
Hirayama Ikuo, 65, 86, 87, 112, 288, 296; Pl. 170
Hishida Shunsō, 26, 27, 28, 35, 35 (n.4), 37, 38, 39, 40, 42, 74, 86, 87, 100, 101, 102, 103, 148, 149, 150, 160, 162, 262, 293, 296–97, 298, 319, 320, 331, 333; Figs. 3.1, 3.3, 4.2; Pls. 35, 39, 40, 50
Hishikawa Moronobu, 108
Hitler, Adolf, 58
Hiyoshigaoka High School, 85
Hōan. *See* Kosugi Hōan (Misei)
Hodler, Ferdinand, 12
Hōgai. *See* Kanō Hōgai
Holbein, Hans, 52
Honda Kinkichirō, 317
Hōryūji, 91, 171, 296, 299, 313, 315
Hōshun. *See* Yamaguchi Hōshun
Hōsun (magazine), 312
Hototogisu (magazine), 317
Hyakusui. *See* Hirafuku Hyakusui

Ichigi Masuzō, 300
Iharaki shinbun (newspaper), 317
Iida Shinshichi (Iida brothers), 21, 32
Iizuka Beiu, 116, 321
Ike no Taiga, 118, 317
Ikeda Unshō, 83, 84
Ikeda Yōson, 51–52, 83, 105, 235, 297–98; Pl. 122
Imaizumi Yūsaku, 37
Imamura Shikō, 37, 39, 40, 42, 51, 52, 54, 74, 103, 168, 196, 239, 242, 262, 284, 294, 298–99, 310, 313, 331, 333; Fig. 4.4; Pls. 59, 126, 128, 146
Imamura Yasunosuke (Kōsō), 298
Imao Keinen, 21, 30, 32, 37, 44, 45, 76, 77, 83, 84, 92, 98, 309, 312, 325
Imperial Academy of Fine Arts (Teikoku Bijutsu-in), 57, 81, 93, 98–99, 105, 296, 306
Imperial Art School (Teikoku Bijutsu Gakkō), 329
Imperial Arts Academy (Teikoku Geijutsu-in), 99
Imperial College of Engineering, 22
Imperial Household Artist (*Teishitsu gigeiin*), 92–93, 94, 203, 290, 306, 320, 325
Imperial Household Museum (Teishitsu Hakubutsukan), 90, 94, 299
Imperial Museum (Teikoku Hakubutsukan), 26, 31, 37, 86, 90, 92, 297
Impressionism, 67, 304, 318, 321
Imperial Palace: Akasaka Detached Palace, 95; Aoyama Detached Palace, 42, 203; Kyoto Imperial Palace, 82, 308, 314, 321; Shūgakuin Detached Palace, 230; Tokyo Imperial Palace, 29, 93, 94, 290, 292, 295, 303, 311
Imperial Rule Assistance Association (Taisei Yokusankai), 305
Industry and Commerce Company (Kiritsu Kōshō Kaisha), 78
Inoue Michiyasu, 46
Inoue Yasushi, 329
Inshō. *See* Dōmoto Inshō
Institute of Barbarian Studies (Bansho Shirabesho), 22
Inten. *See* Japan Art Institute
Inui Masako, 314
Ioki Bunsai, 311
Irie Hakō, 51–52, 85, 105, 107, 171, 264, 299, 308, 315, 319; Pls. 62, 148
Ise Shrine, 22, 26
Ishiguro, Kazuo, 61 (n.2)
Ishii Teiko, 22
Ishikawa Kōmei, 86, 92
Isoda Koryūsai, 108
Issai-sha, 322
Issui-kai, 300
Itō Jakuchū, 133
Itō Hirobumi, 302
Itō Sachio, 296
Itō Shinsui, 17, 62, 64, 108; Fig. 7.4
Itō Sōhaku, 107
Iwahashi Eien, 58, 68, 278, 292, 300; Pl. 162
Iwasaki Yoshikazu, 74
Iwata Shigeyoshi, 68; Fig. 7.11
Izumi Kyōka, 13, 56, 64, 253, 301

Japan Art Association (Nihon Bijutsu Kyōkai), 17, 22, 26, 28–29, 30, 31, 37, 79, 80–81, 92, 93, 94, 96, 97, 102, 104, 290, 305, 316, 330
Japan Art Institute (Nihon Bijutsu-in), 28, 35, 37, 38, 39–40, 41, 62, 63, 79, 81, 87, 93, 96, 97, 101, 102–3, 107, 109, 292, 293, 294, 295, 296, 297,

298, 300, 302, 303, 306, 309, 313, 317, 318, 319, 331, 333; Inten (Exhibitions of the Japan Art Institute), 39–40, 101, 103; Reorganized Japan Art Institute (Saikō Nihon Bijutsu-in), 39, 42, 45, 53, 98, 103, 299, 304, 312, 313, 319, 326, 331; Saikō Inten (Exhibitions of the Reorganized Japan Art Institute), 103

Japan Art Patriotic Society (Nihon Bijutsu Hōkokukai), 58

Japan Arts Academy (Nihon Geijutsu-in), 97, 99, 292, 314

Japan-British Exposition (*Nichi-Ei hakurankai*), 152, 310

Japan Painters' Patriotic Society (Nihon Gaka Hōkokukai), 58

Japan Painting Association (Nihon Kaiga Kyōkai), 29, 81, 102, 301, 310

Japan Young Painters' Association (Nihon Seinen Kaiga Kyōkai), 29, 102, 305

Japanese Art Exhibitions in Paris (*Pari Nihon bijutsu jūrankai*), 78–79, 302, 306

Jin Nong, 294

Jinmin shinbun (newspaper), 301

Jitchū, 172

Jitsugetsu-kai, 95

Jōno Saigaku Denpei, 300–301

Joun-sha, 18, 76–77, 84, 311, 315, 321; Kōso Joun-sha, 76, 77

juku, 82–83, 104

Kabuki (magazine), 301

Kaburaki Kiyokata, 13, 17, 41, 45, 55, 56, 62, 64, 92, 99, 108, 109, 195, 253, 295, 300–301, 306, 309, 312, 322, 323, 329; Fig. 4.5; Pls. 86, 136

kachō-ga, 203–21

Kagaku. *See* Murakami Kagaku

Kainoshō Tadaoto, 83, 105, 309

Kajita Hanko, 108, 109, 310, 313, 318

Kajiwara Hisako, 109

Kakō. *See* Tsuji Kakō

Kamiyama Hōyō, 312

Kanagaki Robun, 306

Kanashima Keika, 83, 105

Kandinsky, Wassily, 291, 324

Kaneko Kuheiji,107

Kanga-kai, 23, 79, 80, 86, 89, 102, 135, 293, 302, 319

Kanō Eigaku, 308

Kanō Eishō, 76

Kanō Eitoku, 16, 31, 89, 92, 93

Kanō Hōgai, 23, 25, 29, 31, 32, 33, 38, 86, 89, 100, 125, 129, 134, 135, 136, 242, 292, 293, 301–2, 319, Figs. 2.6, 2.7; Pls. 14, 21, 22

Kanō Masanobu, 18

Kanō Motonobu, 31, 58

Kanō Natsuo, 86, 92

Kanō Sanraku, 88

Kanō school, 16–17, 18, 82, 84, 89, 100, 129, 134, 136; Kobiki-chō Kanō school, 82, 136, 150, 293, 302, 319; Surugadai Kanō school, 306

Kanō Shōsen'in Tadanobu, 82, 136, 293, 302

Kanō Tanbi, 16

Kanō Tan'yū, 31

Kanō Tomonobu, 22, 25, 32, 86, 89, 302

Kanokogi Takeshirō, 292

Kanpo. *See* Araki Kanpo

Kansai. *See* Mori Kansai

Kansai Art Institute (Kansai Bijutsu-in), 30, 85, 106

Kansai Art Society (Kansai Bijutsu-kai), 323, 331

Kansetsu. *See* Hashimoto Kansetsu

kanten (government-sponsored exhibitions), 81, 87, 97, 104

Kanzaki Ken'ichi, 76

Kanzan. *See* Shimomura Kanzan

Kataoka Kōkō, 293

Kataoka Tamako, 103, 112, 279, 302–3; Pl. 163

Katayama Nanpū, 48, 103, 198, 200, 303; Fig. 5.8; Pls. 89, 91

Katayama Tōkuma, 90

Katsukawa Shunchō, 108

Katsukawa Shunshō, 108

Katsushika Hokusai, 304

Kawabata Gyokushō, 25, 28, 29, 31, 32, 37, 86, 87, 89, 92, 133, 137, 293, 295, 303–4, 311; Pls. 20, 24

Kawabata Painting School (Kawabata Gagakkō), 304, 332

Kawabata Ryūshi, 45, 52–53, 54, 56, 57, 59, 61, 62, 63, 65, 69, 74, 99, 103, 173, 220, 237, 247, 256, 292, 295, 301, 304–5, 317, 320, 332, 333; Figs. 6.2, 7.1, 7.2; Pls. 64, 110, 124ab, 131, 140

Kawabe Mitate, 29

Kawai Gyokudō, 35, 37, 38, 41, 42, 44, 45, 50, 92, 98, 99, 104, 158, 226, 238, 293, 300, 305–6, 328; Pls. 48, 114, 125

Kawakami Tōgai, 22, 25, 138, 290

Kawakita Michiaki, 108, 331

Kawamura Manshū, 105

Kawanabe Kyōsai, 16, 99, 103, 114, 120–27, 304, 306–7, 329; Pls. 6–13

Kawasaki Senko, 16

Kawasaki Shōko, 79, 87, 322

Kawase Hideharu, 22, 78

Kawashima Jinbei, 32

Kawashima Riichirō, 107

Kawatake Mokuami, 126

Kayama Jirō, 300

Kayama Matazō, 69–70, 71, 86, 268, 289, 307, 330, 332; Figs. 7.13, 7.14; Pl. 171

Kayukawa Shinji, 107

Keigetsu. *See* Kikuchi Keigetsu

Keisen. *See* Tomita Keisen

Kikkawa Reika, 295

Kikuchi Hōbun, 32, 37, 77, 83, 85, 104, 308, 309, 311, 328

Kikuchi-juku, 83

Kikuchi Keigetsu, 45, 54, 61, 64, 85, 92, 99, 104, 105, 109, 191, 255, 291, 299, 307–8; Pls. 82, 139

Kikuchi Yōsai, 17, 306, 310, 329

Kimura Buzan, 102, 103

Kimura Shikō, 108

Kimura Shōhachi, 292, 329

Kinji gahō (mgazine), 312

Kinkakuji, 247, 320

Kinkozan Sōbei, 33

Kino Baitei, 163

Kinrei-sha, 295

Kinugasa-kai, 83

Kinugasa Tankoku, 326

Kishi Chikudō, 21, 30, 32, 35, 76, 84, 88, 92, 139, 142, 143, 144, 146, 160, 208, 308–9, 316, 321, 323, 325; Fig. 2.4; Pls. 26, 29, 31–33

Kishi Renzan, 308

Kishi school, 18, 139, 308

Kishida Ryūsei, 52, 294, 312, 327; Fig. 5.15

Kitagawa Utamaro, 108, 298

Kitano Shrine, 122

Kitano Tsunetomi, 41, 103, 186, 194, 309–10; Pls. 78, 85

Kitazawa Noriaki, 14

Kiyokata. *See* Kaburaki Kiyokata

Kiyomizu Rokubei, 130, 166

Kiyomizudera, 246

Klee, Paul, 324

Kline, Franz, 71

Kobayashi Gokyō, 77

Kobayashi Kiyochika, 17, 108, 141, 303

Kobayashi Kokei, 37, 39, 52, 54, 55, 63, 87, 92, 99, 109, 164, 249, 250, 266, 294, 302, 310, 312, 313, 318, 331; Pls. 52, 133, 134, 151, 152

Kobayashi Sōkyūjin, 317

Kobiki-chō Kanō school. *See* Kanō school

Kōbō Daishi (Kūkai), 237

Kobori Tomoto, 29, 37, 44, 87, 92, 98, 102, 331

Kōda Rohan, 13

Kodama Katei, 308

Kōfū-kai, 95

Koizumi Katsuji, 322

Koizumi Seidō, 87

Kōji-kai, 294, 298, 310, 313, 331

Kokei. *See* Kobayashi Kokei

Kokka (magazine), 26

Kokudo-kai, 322

Kokuga-kai, 107

Kokugakuin University, 313

Kokumin no tomo (magazine), 329

Kokumin shinbun (newspaper), 32, 140, 141, 295, 304, 312, 317

Komai Genki, 108

Komatsu Hitoshi, 242, 292

Komuro Suiun, 92

Kōno Bairei, 20, 21, 30, 31, 76, 82–83, 84, 85, 88, 92, 104, 105, 109, 130, 131, 143, 299, 303, 305, 308, 309, 310–11, 312, 315, 321, 325, 326, 327; Fig. 2.5; Pls. 16–18, 31

Kōno Private Atelier (Kōno Shijuku), 83

Konoe Atsumaro, 315

Konoe Masaie, 242

Konoshima Ōkoku, 38

Konpira Shrine, 314, 321

Korean Art Exhibition (*Chōsen bijutsu tenrankai*), 306, 313

Kosaka Shōdō, 87

Kose no Kanaoka, 31

Kose Shōseki, 20, 26, 31, 32, 84, 86, 89, 293, 319

Kōso Joun-sha. *See* Joun-sha

Kosugi Hōan (Misei), 30, 40, 103, 179, 239, 311–12, 316, 317; Pls. 71, 126

Kōtoku Shūsui, 317

Koyama Sanzō, 84

Koyama Shōtarō, 98, 311

Koyama Taigetsu, 294

Kubota Beisen, 20, 21, 32, 33, 60, 76, 83, 84, 85, 132, 140, 141, 311, 312–13, 329; Pls. 19, 27, 28

Kubota Setsuyō, 325

Kuki Ryūichi, 20, 22, 28, 29, 31, 33, 34, 35 (n.4), 86, 92, 93

Kumagai Naohiko, 92

Kume Keiichirō, 27, 30, 35, 86, 304; Fig. 3.8

Kunii Ōbun, 76, 84, 88

Kunii Ōyō, 77

Kunisawa Shinkurō, 138, 290, 317

Kunishige Masafumi, 84

Kuroda Jūtarō, 106
Kuroda Seiki, 27, 28, 30, 32, 33, 36, 86, 92, 94, 96, 98, 304
Kusano Ryūun, 77
Kusunoki Masashige, 61, 255
Kyōsai. *See* Kawanabe Kyōsai
Kyoto Art Association (Kyoto Bijutsu Kyōkai), 29, 76, 77, 312, 316
Kyoto-City Exhibition of Arts and Crafts (*Kyoto-shi bijutsu kōgeihin ten*), 325
Kyoto-City Painting School (Kyoto-shi Gagakkō), 84
Kyoto-City School of Arts (Kyoto-shi Bijutsu Gakkō), 84
Kyoto-City School of Arts and Crafts (Kyoto-shi Bijutsu Kōgei Gakkō), 30, 42, 83, 84, 88
Kyoto City University of Arts (Kyoto Shiritsu Geijutsu Daigaku), 85, 319
Kyoto Dōda High School of Arts and Crafts (Kyoto Shiritsu Dōda Bijutsu Kōgei Kōtō Gakkō), 85
Kyoto Expositions (*Kyoto hakurankai*), 19, 76, 311, 315, 321, 330
Kyoto Higher Craft School (Kyoto Kōto Kōgei Gakkō), 33
Kyoto Imperial Museum, 42, 43
Kyoto Imperial University, 33, 42, 43, 106
Kyoto Independent Exhibition, 320
Kyoto Municipal College of Art (Kyoto Shiritsu Bijutsu Daigaku), 85
Kyoto Municipal High School of Art (Kyoto Shiritsu Bijutsu Kōtō Gakkō), 85
Kyoto Municipal Museum of Art (Kyoto-shi Bijutsukan), 316
Kyoto Municipal School of Arts and Crafts (Kyoto Shiritsu Bijutsu Kōgei Gakkō), 84, 104, 106, 185, 291, 299, 307, 315, 316, 319, 320, 323, 324, 325, 330, 333
Kyoto Municipal Special School of Art (Kyoto Shiritsu Bijutsu Senmon Gakkō), 85, 319
Kyoto Municipal Special School of Painting (Kyoto Shiritsu Kaiga Senmon Gakkō), 42, 83, 84, 105, 106, 107, 248, 291, 292, 298, 299, 308, 314, 315, 318, 319, 320, 324, 326, 330
Kyoto National Museum, 91
Kyoto New and Old Art Exhibition (*Kyoto shinko bijutsukai*), 95
Kyoto Painting Circle (*Kyoto gadan*), 82, 104–5, 294, 308, 322, 323, 324, 326
Kyoto-Prefecture Painting School (Kyoto-fu Gagakkō), 20, 26, 77, 82, 83, 84–85, 86, 88, 89, 104, 310, 311, 312
Kyoto Young Painters' Competitive Exhibition (*Kyoto seinen kaiga kyōshinkai*), 29, 104
Kyoto Young Painters' Study Group (Kyoto Seinen Kaiga Kenkyūkai), 104, 311, 312, 325
Kyūjin. *See* Yamamoto Kyūjin

LaFarge, John, 149, 297
Laozi, 317
Le Chat Noir, 106, 223, 318, 327
Le Masque, 106, 185, 223, 309, 318, 327
Leonardo da Vinci, 320
Leys, Hendrik, 27
literati painting. *See nanga*
Louisiana Purchase Exposition (St. Louis, 1904), 33–34, 150, 290, 293, 297, 331

MacArthur, Douglas, 334
Machida Hisanari, 22
Maeda Seison, 37, 39, 45, 47, 52, 55, 56, 57, 63–64, 65, 74, 92, 99, 103, 109, 165, 170, 172, 199, 201, 246, 257, 261, 266, 296, 310, 312, 313–14, 331; Figs. 5.1, 5.3, 7.3; Pls. 53, 61, 63, 90, 92, 130, 141, 145
Makimura Masanao, 18–21, 84, 88, 321
Makino Nobuaki, 36, 94
Makino Torao, 292, 329
Manchurian Art Exhibition, 313
Manet, Edouard, 67
Mantei Ōga, 306
Mao Zedong, 295
Maruki Iri, 61; Fig. 6.4
Maruyama Ōkyo, 18, 31, 58, 88, 100, 108, 139, 314, 321
Maruyama Ōritsu, 76
Maruyama Ōzui, 29
Maruyama school, 18, 88. *See also* Maruyama-Shijō school
Maruyama-Shijō school, 18, 89, 105, 108, 109, 111, 131
Masaki Naohiko, 36, 87, 96, 98
Masuda Takashi, 23
Matisse, Henri, 64, 65, 66, 330
Matsubara Sangorō, 297
Matsubayashi Keigetsu, 92
Matsuda Genji, 57, 58, 99
Matsukata Masayoshi, 23
Matsumoto Fūko, 32, 98, 294, 298, 310
Matsumoto Matatarō, 96
Matsumura Keibun, 76, 88
Matsuo Bashō, 63, 173, 312
Matsuo Gisuke, 78, 329
Matsuoka Eikyū, 45–46, 64, 86, 87, 251, 295, 302, 321, 322, 329, 330; Fig. 5.2
Matsuoka Hisashi, 98
Matsuoka Shizuo, 46
Matsuzakaya, 280, 282
Meiji Art Society (Meiji Bijutsu-kai), 30, 31, 95, 98, 311
Meiji Emperor, 15, 17, 19, 34, 47, 94, 203
Meiji Memorial Picture Gallery, 47
Meiji Painting Society (Meiji Gakai), 95
Meiji Shrine, 320
Menpes, Mortimer, 306
Mi Fu, 228, 333
Miidera, 119, 169
Mikami Makoto, 66, 68, 72, 286, 314–15, 320; Figs. 7.9, 7.10; Pl. 156
Ming painting, 18, 150, 321
Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce, 31, 32, 78, 90, 321
Ministry of Communications, 318
Ministry of Education, 20, 22, 25, 28, 29, 36–37, 41, 62, 80, 81, 86, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 98, 99, 100, 105, 302, 320
Ministry of Education's Museum (Monbushō Hakubutsukan), 90
Ministry of Finance, 22, 78
Ministry of Industry, 100
Ministry of the Imperial Household, 31, 34, 79, 80, 90, 92, 93, 138
Ministry of the Interior, 78, 90, 333
Ministry of the Navy, 16
Mishima Yukio, 57, 247
Mitsuritsu-kai, 106
Miyake Gogyō, 77
Mizuno Toshikata, 108, 300, 309
Mochizuki Gyokusen (1692–1755), 18
Mochizuki Gyokusen (1834–1912), 20, 76, 77, 84, 85, 88, 92, 143, 305, 309, 321
Mochizuki school, 18
Modigliani, Amedeo, 322
Mokurai, 328
Mondrian, Piet, 66
Monet, Claude, 67, 115
Moore, Henry, 59
Mori Ippō, 314
Mori Kansai, 30, 31, 76, 77, 84, 88, 92, 104, 129, 143, 308, 314–15, 325, 330; Pls. 15, 31
Mori Ōgai, 13, 44, 98
Mori Sosen, 209
Mori Tetsuzan, 209, 314
Mori Yūzan, 77, 315
Morikawa Sobun, 21, 30, 76, 77, 83, 84, 143, 321
Morimoto Tōkaku, 299
Morita Tsunetomo, 312
Moriya Tadashi, 86
Morizumi Tsurana, 31, 92
mōrō-tai (hazy style), 35, 38, 39, 102, 148, 149, 150, 163, 297, 333
Morrison, Arthur, 320
Morse, Edward Sylvester, 82–83, 130
Muller, Max, 20
Munch, Edvard, 298
Muqi, 32
Murakami Kagaku, 59, 85, 105, 106–7, 182, 183, 213, 236, 248, 299, 315–16, 318, 319, 330; Pls. 74, 75, 123, 132
Murata Deigyū, 87
Murata Tanryō, 29
Musée des Arts Décoratifs de Paris, 78
Musée Guimet, 20
Musei-kai, 87, 295
Museum Bureau (Hakubutsukyoku), 16
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 23, 24 (n.11), 25, 28, 52–53, 59, 86, 101, 103, 297, 304
Museum of the Imperial Collections (Sannomaru Shōzōkan), 95
Mushanokōji Saneatsu, 200, 303
Mustard-Seed Garden Manual (Kaishien gaden, or Jieziyuan Huazhuan), 88

Nagasawa Rosetsu, 108
Nagatsuka Takashi, 296
Nagayama Kōin, 108
Naiki Seibei, 326
Nakagawa Kigen, 292, 329
Nakahashi Tokugorō, 44, 57
Nakai Sōtarō, 85, 106, 299, 308, 327
Nakajima Antai, 308
Nakajima Kiyoshi, 302
Nakajima Kōson, 294
Nakajima Raishō, 76, 303, 311
Nakamura Daizaburō, 109
Nakamura Fusetsu, 47, 98, 297; Fig. 5.5
Nakamura Gakuryō, 86, 292, 329
Nakamura Teii, 310
Nakamura Utaemon VI, 64
Nakanishi Kōseki, 76, 84
Nakayama Komatarō, 309
Nakazawa Iwata, 33, 38

Namikawa Sōsuke, 157, 329; Pls. 46, 47
nanga, 17, 18, 19, 20, 39, 81, 84, 88, 174–83, 322
Nanjō Fumio, 20
Nanpū. *See* Katayama Nanpū
Nara Art Institute (Nara Bijutsu-in), 102
Nara National Museum, 91
Nara Women Teachers' College (Nara Kōtō Shihan Gakkō), 317
National Arts Club, New York, 297
National Museum (Kokuritsu Hakubutsukan), 90, 91
National Painting Competitive Exhibition (*Zenkoku kaiga kyōshinkai*), 77
National Science Museum (Kokuritsu Kagaku Hakubutsukan), 91
Natsume Sōseki, 13, 47, 49, 333
Negoroji, 122
neo-classicism (*shin-koten-shugi*), 308, 331
New Faction (*Shinpa*), 29, 37, 39, 41, 79, 80, 81, 92, 93, 97, 102, 103, 107, 293, 306
new *nanga*, 176
New *Nihonga* Study Group (Shin Nihonga Kenkyūkai), 292, 300
New *Yamato-e* Society (Shinkō Yamato-e-kai), 251, 329
Nihon bijutsu (magazine), 101
Nihonga (Japanese-style painting): definition of, 14, 100; distinction from *yōga*, 12, 14, 20, 71, 84, 100–101, 296; format of, 21; materials and techniques of, 110–12
Nihonga-kai, 95
Nika-kai, 97, 98, 103
Nishi Honganji, 20
Nishijin, 19, 323
Nishimura Goun, 38, 61, 83, 104, 208, 316–17, 323; Fig. 4.1; Pl. 156
Nishimura Sōzaemon, 19, 32, 309
Nishiwaki Junzaburō, 57
Nishiyama Suishō, 83, 92, 105, 109, 291, 323, 327
Nitten (Japan Art Exhibition; *Nihon bijutsu tenrankai*), 62, 66, 97, 99, 270, 318, 322, 330
Nitten Foundation, 97, 99
Noda Kyūho, 38
Noguchi Shōhin, 17, 32, 92
Noguchi Yūkoku, 32, 92
Nomura Bunkyo, 31, 330
Nomura Kō, 68; Fig. 7.12
Nonagase Banka, 106–7, 299, 315, 318, 319, 327
Notomi Kaijirō, 22

Ochiai Yoshiiku, 301
Oda Hankei, 84
Ogata Gekkō, 108
Ogata Kōrin, 18, 31, 58, 218, 298
Ogawa Shōmin, 86
Ogawa Usen, 179, 316–17, 333; Pls. 69, 70
Ogura Tetsuju, 317
Ogura Yuki, 103, 112, 202, 317; Pl. 93
Oguri Fūyō, 56
Ogyū Tensen, 322
Ōhashi Suiseki, 33
Okada Kenzō, 71
Okada Saburōsuke, 98, 300
Okajima Seikō, 293
Okakura Tenshin, 14, 23, 25–28, 29, 31, 33, 34, 35, 35 (n.4), 36, 37, 38, 39, 41, 53, 63, 79, 80, 86–87, 89, 92, 97, 100–101, 102, 135, 136, 137, 149, 150, 262, 292, 293, 297, 298, 301, 302, 304, 310, 313, 320, 331, 333
Okamoto Toyohiko, 108, 321
Okamura Utarō, 107
Okuhara Seiko, 17
Okumura Togyū, 87, 103, 109, 272, 318; Pl. 156
Ōkura Kishichirō, 50
Ōkura mission, 263
Ōkura Shūkokan Museum, 50
Old Faction (*Kyūha*), 29, 37, 39, 79, 80, 81, 92, 93, 97, 102, 306
Omoda Seiju, 294
Ōmori Ichū, 78
Ono Chikkyō, 50–51, 85, 105, 106–7, 223, 294, 298, 299, 309, 315, 316, 318, 319, 325, 327; Pl. 111
Ono Kōzan, 143
Order of Cultural Merit (*Bunka kunshō*), 85, 292, 306
Ōsumi Nankō, 325
Ōta Ryū, 314
Ōtagaki Rengetsu, 325
Ōtani Kubutsu, 323
Ōtori Shrine, 325
Ōtsu-e, 119, 169, 323
Ōtsuka Yasuji, 96
Ozaki Kōyō, 301, 313

Pacific Painting Society (Taiheiyō Gakai), 30, 95, 312; Pacific Painting Society's Institute (Taiheiyō Gakai Kenkyūjo), 294, 304
Painting Association (Kōso Kyōkai), 77
Painting Research Advisory (Zuga Chōsa-kai), 80
Painting Research Division (Zuga Torishirabe Kakari), 80, 89
Panreal Art Association (Panriaru Bijutsu Kyōkai), 66, 67, 68, 286, 287, 314, 320
Paris Expositions: of 1867, 19; of 1878, 32, 329; of 1889, 32, 311, 312; of 1900, 28, 33, 36, 104, 147, 290, 293, 320
Peers School (Gakushūin), 18, 31
Perry, Commodore Matthew, 15
Person of Cultural Merit (*Bunka kōrōsha*), 306
Philadelphia Centennial Exhibition (1876), 17
Picasso, Pablo, 59, 64, 65, 66, 72, 314
Pollock, Jackson, 67
Post-Impressionism, 67, 106, 109, 294, 318, 327
Pre-Raphaelites, 27, 315
Prince Arisugawa Taruhito, 79, 80, 94
Prince Chichibu, 180
Prince Heinrich of Austria, 311
Prince Takatsukasa, 321
Proust, Antonin, 78
Puvis de Chavannes, Pierre, 304, 312

Qing painting, 18, 19, 88, 150, 321

Raphael, 320
Rai San'yō, 253
Régamey, Felix, 20
Reizei Tamechika, 18
Rekitei Art Association (Rekitei Bijutsu Kyōkai), 300
Renaissance painting, 109, 299, 308, 318
Renge Kōin (Yasui Shrine), 321
Renoir, Pierre-Auguste, 51, 106, 109, 265, 327
Reorganized Japan Art Institute (Saikō Nihon Bijutsu-in). *See* Japan Art Institute
Ribbentrop, Joachim von, 58
Rinpa, 18
Rōben, 172
Rodin, Auguste, 49, 52
Rokuchō-kai, 292, 329
Roman art, 299
Rossetti, Gabriel Dante, 27
Rousseau, Henri, 51, 66, 327
Ruskin, John, 33
Rusō Painting Society (Rusō Gasha), 322, 330
Ryōkan, 330
Ryōun-juku, 83
Ryūchi-kai, 22, 78–79, 80, 81, 94, 102
Ryūshi. *See* Kawabata Ryūshi

Saeki Yūzō, 57
Saigō Kogetsu, 27, 35 (n.4), 87, 102; Fig. 3.4
Saigyō, 312
Saikō Inten. *See* Japan Art Institute
Saionji Kinmochi, 28, 36, 96
Saitō Mokichi, 296
Saitō Ryūzō, 103
Sakai Hōitsu, 329
Sakakibara Rokō, 319
Sakakibara Shihō, 85, 105, 106–7, 213, 299, 315, 318, 319; Pl. 103
Sakakibara Shikō, 107
Sakuma Shōzan, 302
Sakurai Chūgō, 331
Sanae-kai, 83
Sango-kai, 317
Sanju-sha, 292
Sannan-kai, 83
Sano Tsunetami, 20, 22, 78, 80, 81, 92
San'yūtei Enchō, 55, 195, 301
Sasagawa Rinpū, 103
Sasaki Jōhei, 18
Sawatari Tessai, 312
Segawa Angorō, 295
Seikō-sha, 83
Seihō. *See* Takeuchi Seihō
Seiryū-sha, 62, 63, 69, 237, 292, 300, 305, 320, 332
Seitō-sha, 83
Seison. *See* Maeda Seison
Seitei. *See* Watanabe Seitei (Shōtei)
Sekiyō-kai, 103, 294, 299
Sengai Gibon, 326
Sesshū Tōyō, 18, 29, 31, 58, 63, 84, 129, 293, 307
Sesson, 58, 293
Shen Nanping, 133
Shibata Zeshin, 92, 300, 329
Shiga Naoya, 49
Shige Shuntō, 76
Shijō school, 18, 88. *See also* Maruyama-Shijō school
Shihō. *See* Sakakibara Shihō
Shikō. *See* Imamura Shikō
Shikō-kai, 331
Shima Seien, 310
Shimomura Hōzan, 319
Shimomura Kanzan, 25, 26, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 45, 51, 54, 86, 87, 92, 97, 98, 100, 101, 102, 103, 149, 188, 239, 242, 284, 293, 319–20, 333; Pls. 80, 126, 127

Shimomura Ryōnosuke, 68, 287, 314, 320; Pl. 169
Shimozaki Tōson, 13, 301
Shin-Bunten, 58, 62, 97, 99, 318, 324
Shin-Nihon (newspaper), 309
Shin-Nitten, 271
Shin-Shōsetsu (newspaper), 301
Shinagawa Yajirō, 79
Shincho gekkan (magazine), 301
Shinchō-sha, 83
Shinju-sha, 107, 324
Shinkai Taketarō, 98
Shinomiya Jun'ichi, 300
Shinsei (magazine), 295
Shinsen. *See* Tokuoka Shinsen
Shintōism, 20, 130
Shintomiza, 126, 306
Shioda Shin, 22, 78
Shiokawa Bunrin, 18, 35, 76, 84, 114–16, 118, 119, 160, 188, 311, 312, 314, 321; Pls. 1–5
Shirakaba (magazine), 51, 106, 200, 327
Shōen. *See* Uemura Shōen
Shōfukuji, 326
Shōsōin, 22, 95
Shōwa Emperor, 57, 91, 94, 180
Shūgakuin Detached Palace. *See* Imperial Palace
Shunkyo. *See* Yamamoto Shunkyo
Shunsō. *See* Hishida Shunsō
Shun'yōdō, 329
Shun'yō-kai, 312
Six Canons of Painting (*Garoppō* or *Hua Liufa*), 84
Society for the Refinement of National Painting (Kokuga Gyokusei-kai), 37, 97, 310
Song Di, 54
Song painting, 106, 215, 242, 293, 318
Spring-Autumn Exhibitions at Higashiyama (*Higashiyama shunjū tenkan*), 76
St. Louis World's Fair (1904). *See* Louisiana Purchase Exposition
Su Shi, 175, 325
Sugita Yūjirō, 107
Sugiyama Yasushi, 65, 86, 112, 275, 321–22, 330; Pl. 159
Suita Sōboku, 107
Surrealism, 64, 278, 292, 300, 314, 330
Surugadai Kanō school. *See* Kanō school
Sutherland, Graham, 59
Suzuki Harunobu, 108
Suzuki Hyakunen, 30, 76, 83, 84, 85, 88, 295, 312
Suzuki Osamu, 57
Suzuki Shōnen, 30, 76, 83, 143, 311, 326, 328
Symbolism, 313

Tagore, Rabindranath, 39, 298
Taguchi Kikutei, 295
Taikan. *See* Yokoyama Taikan
Taira no Kiyomori, 55, 165
Taira no Koremori, 55, 165
Taiseigi-kai, 83, 305
Taishō Emperor, 42
Taishō Exposition (*Taishō hakurankai*), 304
Takahashi Kōko, 303
Takahashi Yuichi, 22, 30, 100, 290, 303, 311, 321
Takamatsuzuka tumulus, 296, 313
Takamine Hideo, 37, 92
Takamura Kōtarō, 49, 51, 295
Takamura Kōun, 49, 86, 92, 98
Takashimaya, 21, 43, 152, 238, 239, 305, 323, 327, 331
Takayama Tatsuo, 64, 65, 86, 274, 322; Pl. 158
Takehisa Yumeji, 17
Takesu Yūkō, 77
Takeuchi Seihō, 21, 29, 30, 33, 35, 37, 38, 39, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 50, 51, 59, 74, 77, 83, 85, 88, 92, 98, 99, 104–5, 109, 144, 147, 152, 160, 169, 184, 203, 206, 207, 208, 210, 211, 212, 223, 259, 264, 291, 294, 297, 298, 308, 309, 311, 315, 316, 318, 319, 321, 322–23, 324, 326, 327, 328, 330; Pls. 34, 41, 43, 49, 60, 76, 94, 96, 97, 100–102, 142, 143
Taki Katei, 17, 29, 32, 48, 92
Taki Seiichi, 48
Takiguchi Shūzō, 300
Tale of Genji (Genji monogatari), 164, 191
Tale of the Bamboo Cutter (Taketori monogatari), 54, 164, 310
Tale of the Heike (Heike monogatari), 55, 59, 165
Tamaki Suekazu, 55, 197, 324; Pl. 88
Tamako. *See* Kataoka Tamako
Tamura Sōryū, 20, 84, 311, 321; Fig. 2.3
Tanaka Kisaku, 106, 318
Tanaka Zennosuke, 106
Tani Bunchō, 290
Taniguchi Aizan, 76, 83, 84, 143
Taniguchi Kōkyō, 77, 83, 85, 104, 311, 328
Tanizaki Jun'ichirō, 332
Tanomura Chikuden, 84, 253
Tanomura Chokunyū, 20, 76, 83, 84, 85, 87, 143, 311, 325
Tapié, Michel, 67–69, 291
Tatsumi Painting Society (Tatsumi Gakai), 95, 310
Tatsuzawa Nobujirō, 103
Tawaraya Sōtatsu, 18, 168, 298, 300, 307
Tazaki Sōun, 31, 92
Technical Art School (Kōbu Bijutsu Gakkō), 22, 30, 37, 84, 87, 100
Tegami zasshi (magazine), 295
Teiten (Exhibition of the Imperial Academy of Fine Arts; *Teikoku Bijutsu-in tenrankai*), 44–45, 56, 57–58, 97, 98–99, 105, 107, 108, 190, 192, 210, 233, 291, 292, 296, 298, 301, 302, 308, 316, 321, 324, 327, 328, 329
Tensai Gajuku, 297
Tenshin. *See* Okakura Tenshin
Terasaki Kōgyō, 29, 37, 38, 42, 87, 92, 102, 108
Terashima Shimei, 108
Tessai. *See* Tomioka Tessai
Tobey, Mark, 67, 71
Tōdaiji, 22, 172
Tōei (magazine), 32
Togari Soshinan, 292
Togyū. *See* Okumura Togyū
Tokonatsu-sō, 251
Tokuda Shūsei, 56
Tokugawa Ieyasu, 16, 122
Tokunaga Kakusen, 33
Tokuno Ryōsuke, 22
Tokuoka Shinsen, 105, 218, 271, 324–25; Pls. 108, 155
Tokutomi Sohō, 140, 295, 312
Tokyo Asahi (newspaper), 46
Tokyo English School, 333
Tokyo Higher Industrial School (Tokyo Kōtō Kōgyo Gakkō), 27
Tokyo Higher Teachers' School (Tokyo Kōtō Shihan Gakkō), 37
Tokyo Imperial University (Tokyo University), 23, 25, 30, 35, 48, 85, 100, 104, 106, 312, 333
Tokyo Industrial Exposition Art Gallery (Tokyo Kangyō Hakurankai Bijutsukan), 38, 96
Tokyo Metropolitan Crafts School (Tokyo Furitsu Kōgei Gakkō), 330
Tokyo Museum (Tokyo Hakubutsukan), 91
Tokyo Music School (Tokyo Ongaku Gakkō), 87, 100
Tokyo National Museum (Tokyo Kokuritsu Hakubutsukan), 62, 90–91
Tokyo National Research Institute of Cultural Properties (Tokyo Kokuritsu Bunkazai Kenkyūjo), 99
Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music (Tokyo Geijutsu Daigaku), 63, 81, 87, 296, 300, 314
Tokyo Nichinichi (newspaper), 300
Tokyo-Prefecture Crafts Competitive Exhibition (*Tokyo-fu kōgei kyōshinkai*), 290
Tokyo School of Fine Arts (Tokyo Bijutsu Gakkō), 12, 23, 25–28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 35, 36, 37, 38, 41, 45, 48, 56, 64, 70, 79, 80, 81, 86–87, 89, 92, 100, 102, 136, 181, 290, 292, 293, 295, 296, 299, 301, 304, 306, 307, 314, 319, 321, 322, 329, 330, 333
Tokyo Puck (magazine), 304
Tōkyū-sha, 83
Tolstoy, Lev Nikolayevich, 303
Tomimoto Kenkichi, 107
Tomioka Tessai, 35, 45, 76, 92, 98, 143, 166, 167, 175, 299, 315, 325, 326; Pls. 54–58, 65, 66
Tomita Keisen, 39, 50, 99, 103, 104, 176, 177, 298, 326, 327; Pls. 67, 68
Tomita On'ichirō, 302
Torii Kiyonaga, 108
Toryō, 321
Tosa Mitsufumi, 76
Tosa Mitsutake, 84
Tosa school, 18
Tōshōdaiji, 295
Tōshōgū Shrine, 122
Toyama Shōichi, 31
Toyoshirō. *See* Fukuda Toyoshirō
Toyotomi Hideyoshi, 194
Tsuchida Bakusen, 39, 41, 45, 51–52, 56 (n.1), 57, 83, 85, 104, 105, 106–7, 109, 185, 190, 213, 216, 265, 292, 294, 298, 299, 307, 309, 315, 316, 318, 319, 323, 324, 326–27, 330; Pls. 77, 81, 106, 107, 149, 150
Tsuchida Kyōson, 327
Tsuji Kakō, 56, 77, 83, 104, 152, 176, 231, 232, 309, 311, 326, 327–28; Pls. 117–19
Tsuji Kukō, 295
Tsukioka Yoshitoshi, 17, 108, 301
Tsuneoka Bunki, 87
Tsunetomi. *See* Kitano Tsunetomi
Tsuruzawa Tanshin, 76
Turner, J.M.W., 33, 298

Uchida Kyūichi, Fig. 2.2
Uda Tekison, 64, 83; Fig. 7.6
Ueda Tekkō, 326
Uemura Shōen, 17, 32, 38, 41, 58, 59, 92, 104, 108, 109, 187, 192, 193, 323, 328–29; Pls. 79, 83, 84
Uemura Shōkō, 105, 329
Ugō-kai, 301
ukiyo-e, 17, 108, 109

Umehara Ryūsaburō, 107
Umemura Keizan, 77
Union Centrale des Arts Décoratifs, 78
Unno Shōmin, 86
Usen. *See* Ogawa Usen
Ushida Keison, 294
Utagawa Kuniyoshi, 121, 306
Utsumi Kitsudō, 77, 308

van Eyck, Jan, 52
Van Gogh, Vincent, 51, 67, 322, 327
Vienna Exposition (1873), 14, 20, 90, 290

Wada Eisaku, 30, 98
Wada Tokutarō, 329
Wagener, Gottfried, 19–20
Wakai Kenzaburō, 78
Watanabe Bunzaburō, 333
Watanabe Hitoshi, 108
Watanabe Kazan, 100
Watanabe Kōki, 30
Watanabe Nangaku, 108
Watanabe Seitei (Shōtei), 32, 33, 35, 108, 142, 157, 329; Pls. 30, 45, 46
Watsuji Tetsurō, 49, 54
Weld, Charles Goddard, 24 (n.11)
Whistler, James McNeill, 115, 311
Wirgman, Charles, 303
Women's Special School of Art (Joshi Bijutsu Senmon Gakkō), 302
World's Columbian Exposition (Chicago, 1893), 28, 31–32, 86, 139, 140, 290, 311, 312, 329

Xie He, 84

Yamada Bimyō, 329
Yamada Kokō, 143
Yamada Umanosuke, 298
Yamagishi Kayō, 301
Yamaguchi Hōshun, 64, 86, 251, 292, 329–30; Fig. 7.7; Pl. 135
Yamaguchi Kayō, 61, 105; Fig. 6.3
Yamamoto Gorō, 78
Yamamoto Hōsui, 30
Yamamoto Isoroku, 60–61
Yamamoto Kanae, 312
Yamamoto Kyūjin, 66, 70, 86, 87, 276, 277, 292, 307, 322, 330; Pls. 160, 161
Yamamoto Shunkyo, 37, 38, 41, 44, 45, 50, 51, 77, 83, 85, 92, 98, 104, 152, 224, 291, 308, 314, 315, 319, 323, 327, 328, 330–31; Pls. 42, 44, 113
Yamana Tsurayoshi, 16, 92
Yamanouchi Yōdō, 290
Yamataka Nobuakira, 22, 29, 32, 78, 92
Yamato-e, 17, 18, 84, 106, 111
Yamato shinbun (newspaper), 301
Yamauchi Tamon, 300
Yanagida Kunio, 46
Yasuda Shirobei, 311
Yasuda Yukihiko, 37, 39, 40, 53, 55, 60–61, 63, 87, 92, 99, 103, 171, 196, 253, 294, 298, 300, 302, 308, 310, 313, 317, 331, 333; Fig. 6.1; Pls. 87, 137
Yasui Sōtarō, 199
Yazawa Gengetsu, 87
yōga (Western-style painting): definition of, 14, 100. *See also Nihonga*
Yokogawa Kiichirō, 292
Yokomitsu Riichi, 57
Yokoyama Kazan, 88
Yokoyama Misao, 63, 69, 70, 74, 280, 282, 284, 305, 332, Pls. 164–67
Yokoyama Seiki, 76, 294
Yokoyama Taikan, 25, 26, 28, 35, 37, 39, 40, 42–43, 45, 50, 51, 53, 54, 58, 62, 63, 86, 87, 92, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 110, 149, 150, 162, 163, 180, 198, 228, 239, 244, 245, 262, 263, 284, 293, 297, 303, 312, 317, 318, 319, 323, 327, 331, 333–34; Figs. 3.5, 4.3; Pls. 36, 37, 51, 72, 115, 126, 129ab, 147
Yomiuri (newspaper), 301
Yosa no Buson, 18, 118, 294, 312
Yoshida Hiroshi, 311
Yoshida Kōzaburō, 294, 299
Yoshimura Kōichi, 76
Yoshimura Tadao, 86, 302
Yoshioka Kenji, 292
Yōson. *See* Ikeda Yōson
Young Painters' Competitive Exhibition (*Seinen kaiga kyōshinkai*), 29
Yu Meiren, 216
Yuan painting, 18, 106, 215, 242, 293, 318
Yuki. *See* Ogura Yuki
Yūki Masaaki, 25, 86, 89, 333
Yūki Somei, 30, 42, 86, 87, 295, 296
Yukihiko. *See* Yasuda Yukihiko
yūzen, 19, 21, 152, 309

Zhu Da, 294

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